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THE

JACK O'LANTERN;

(LE FEU-FOLLET;)

OR,

THE PRIVATEER.

B1687

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BY

J. FENIMORE COOPER, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"THE PILOT," "THE SPY," "THE TWO ADMIRALS," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1842.

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LONDON:
Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

PREFACE.

THE question, of how much of the following legend is severely true, and how much fiction, is left in doubt, with the express intention, that such historians as have nothing useful to do, may employ their time in drawing the line for their own amusement.

As to the scene chosen for this tale, no apology is deemed necessary. To invent excuses for carrying a man, either physically or in the imagination, into a sea like the Mediterranean, and on a coast like that of Italy, would be an affectation of which we have no idea of being guilty. It is true—nay, it is probable—that we may render the execution unequal to the design; but there can be no great harm in nobly daring, except to him who is injured by his own failure. We hope that they who have ever beheld the scenes we have faintly and so imperfectly described, will pardon our defects,

for the good we have intended them; and that those who have never been so fortunate, will find even our tame pictures so much superior to the realities they have elsewhere witnessed, as to fancy we have succeeded.

Of Raoul Yvard, Ghita Caraccioli, and the Little Folly, we have no more to say than is to be found in the body of the work. As Sancho told the knight, they who gave us the facts connected with all three — we class a vessel among animals — said they were so certain, that we might safely swear they were absolutely true. If we are in error, it is a misfortune we share in common with honest Panza, and that, too, on a subject about equal in moment to the one in which he was misled.

After all, the world hears little, and knows less, of the infinity of details that make up the sum of the incidents of the sea. Historians glean a few prominent circumstances, connected perhaps with battles, treaties, shipwrecks, or chases, and the rest is left a blank to the great bulk of the human race. It has been well said, that the life of every man, if

simply and clearly related, would be found to contain a fund of useful and entertaining information; and it is equally true, that the day of every ship would furnish something of interest to relate, could the dry records of the log-book be given in the graphic language of observation and capacity. A ship, alone, in the solitude of the ocean, is an object for reflection, and a source of poetical as well as of moral feeling; and as we seldom tire of writing about her, we have more than a sympathetic desire that they who do us the honour to form a sort of literary *clientelle*, will never tire of reading.

Our chief concern, on the present occasion, is on the subject of the contrast we have attempted to draw between profound belief and light-hearted infidelity. We think both pictures true to the periods and the respective countries, and we have endeavoured to draw both with due relief, and totally without exaggeration. That strong natural sympathies can exist between those who are widely separated on such a subject, every day's experience

proves; and that some are to be found in whom principle is stronger than even the most insinuating and deceptive of all our passions, we not only hope, but trustfully believe. We have endeavoured to assign the higher and most enduring quality to that portion of the race in which we are persuaded it is the most likely to be found.

This is the seventh sea-tale we have ventured to offer to the public. When the first was written, our friends confidently predicted its failure, on account of the meagreness of the subject, as well as of its disagreeable accompaniments. Not only did that prediction prove untrue, as to our own humble effort; but the public taste has lasted sufficiently long to receive, from other quarters, a very respectable progeny of that parent of this class of writing. We only hope that, in the present instance, there may be found a sufficient family resemblance to allow this particular bantling to pass in the crowd as one of a numerous family.

November, 1842.

THE

JACK O'LANTERN

(LE FEU-FOLLET).

CHAPTER I.

Filled with the face of heaven, which from afar
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is grey.

Childe Harold.

THE charms of the Tyrrhenian sea have been sung since the days of Homer. That the Mediterranean generally, and its beautiful boundaries of Alps and Apennines, with its deeply-indented and irregular shores, form the

most delightful region of the known earth in all that relates to climate, productions, and physical formation, will be readily conceded by the traveller. The countries which border on this midland water, with their promontories buttressing a mimic ocean, their mountain-sides teeming with the picturesque of human life, their heights crowned with watch-towers, their rocky shelves consecrated by hermitages, and their unrivalled sheet dotted with sails, rigged, as it might be, expressly to produce effect in a picture, form a sort of world apart that is replete with delights to all who have the happy fortune to feel charms which not only fascinate the beholder, but which linger in the memories of the absent like visions of a glorious past.

Our present business is with this fragment of a creation that is so eminently beautiful, even in its worst aspects, but which is so often marred by the passions of man in its best. While all admit how much nature has done for the Mediterranean, none will deny that, until very recently, it has been the scene of more ruthless violence, and of deeper personal

wrongs, perhaps, than any other portion of the globe. With different races, more widely separated by destinies than even by origin, habits, and religion, occupying its northern and southern shores, the outwork, as it might be, of Christianity and Mohammedanism, and of an antiquity that defies history, the bosom of this blue expanse has mirrored more violence, has witnessed more scenes of slaughter, and heard more shouts of victory, between the days of Agamemnon and Nelson, than all the rest of the dominions of Neptune together. Nature and the passions have united to render it like the human countenance, which conceals by its smiles and god-like expression the furnace that so often glows within the heart, and the volcano that consumes our happiness. For centuries the Turk and the Moor rendered it unsafe for the European to navigate these smiling coasts; and when the barbarian's power temporarily ceased, it was merely to give place to the struggles of those who drove him from the arena by their larger resources.

The circumstances which rendered the pe-

riod which occurred between the years 1790 and 1815 the most eventful of modern times are familiar to all; though the incidents which chequered that memorable quarter of a century have already passed into history. All the elements of strife that then agitated the world appear now to have subsided as completely as if they owed their existence to a remote age; and living men recall the events of their youth as they regard the recorded incidents of other centuries. Then, each month brought its defeat or its victory, its account of a government overturned, or of a province conquered. The world was agitated like men in a tumult. On that epoch the timid look back with wonder, the young with doubt, and the restless with envy.

The years 1798 and 1799 were two of the most memorable of this ever-memorable period; and to that stirring and teeming season we must carry the mind of the reader, in order to place it in the midst of the scenes it is our object to portray.

Towards the close of a fine day in the month

of August, a light fairy-like craft was fanning her way, before a gentle westerly air, into what is called the Canal of Piombino, steering easterly. The rigs of the Mediterranean are proverbial for their picturesque beauty and quaintness, embracing the xebeque, the felucca, the polacre, and the bombarda, or ketch; and occasionally the lugger. The latter, a species of craft, however, much less common in the waters of Italy than in the Bay of Biscay and the British Channel, was the construction of the vessel in question; a circumstance which the mariners who eyed her from the shores of Elba deemed indicative of mischief. A three-masted lugger that spread a wide breadth of canvass, with a low, dark hull, relieved by a single and almost imperceptible line of red beneath her channels, and a waist so deep that nothing was visible above it but the hat of some mariner taller than common, was considered a suspicious vessel, and not even a fisherman would have ventured out within reach of a shot, so long as her character was unknown. Privateers, or corsairs, as it was the fashion to

term them, (and the name, with even its English signification, was often merited by their acts,) not unfrequently glided down that coast; and it was sometimes dangerous for those who belonged to friendly nations to meet them, in moments when the plunder that a relic of barbarism still legalizes, had failed.

The lugger was actually of about one hundred and fifty tons admeasurement; but her dark paint and low hull gave her an appearance of being much smaller than she really was; still, the spread of her canvass, as she came down before the wind 'wing-and-wing, as seamen term it, or with a sail fanning like the heavy pinions of a sea-fowl on each side, betrayed her pursuits; and, as has been intimated, the mariners on the shore who watched her movements shook their heads in distrust, as they communed among themselves, in very indifferent Italian, concerning her destination and object. This observation, with its accompanying discourse, occurred on the rocky bluff above the town of Porto Ferrajo, in the Island of Elba, a spot which has since become so

renowned as the capital of the mimic dominion of Napoleon. Indeed, the very dwelling which was subsequently used by the fallen emperor as a palace stood within a hundred yards of the speakers, looking out towards the entrance of the canal, and the mountains of Tuscany; or rather, of the little principality of Piombino, the system of merging the smaller in the larger states of Europe not having yet been brought into extensive operation. This house, a building of the size of a better sort of country residence in the United States, was then, as now, occupied by the Florentine governor of the Tuscan portion of the island. It stands on the extremity of a low, rocky promontory which forms the western ramparts of the deep extensive bay, on the side of which, ensconced behind a very convenient curvature of the rocks, which here incline westward in the form of a hook, lies the small port, completely concealed from the sea, as if in dread of visits like those which might be expected from craft resembling the suspicious stranger. This little port, not so large in itself as a modern dock in places

like London or Liverpool, was sufficiently protected against any probable dangers by suitable batteries; and as for the elements, a vessel laid upon a shelf in a closet would be scarcely more secure. In this domestic little basin, which, with the exception of a narrow entrance, was completely surrounded by buildings, lay a few feluccas that traded between the island and the adjacent main, and a solitary Austrian ship, which had come from the head of the Adriatic in quest of iron, as it was pretended, but as much to assume the appearance of trade with the Italian dependency, as with any other purpose.

At the moment of which we are writing, however, only a dozen living beings were visible in or about all these craft. The intelligence that a strange lugger, resembling the one described, was in the offing, had drawn nearly all the mariners ashore; and most of the *habitués* of the port had followed them up the broad steps of the crooked streets which led to the heights behind the town; or to the rocky elevation that overlooks the sea from north-east

to west. The approach of the lugger had produced some such effect on the mariners of this unsophisticated and little-frequented port, as that of the hawk is known to excite among the timid tenants of the barn-yard. The rig of the stranger, in itself a suspicious circumstance, had been noted two hours before by one or two old coasters who habitually passed their idle moments on the heights, examining the signs of the weather and indulging in gossip; and their conjectures had drawn to the Porto Ferrajo mall some twenty men who, fancied themselves, or who actually were, *cognoscenti* in matters of the sea. When, however, the low, long, dark hull, which upheld such wide sheets of canvass, became fairly visible, the omens thickened, rumours spread, and hundreds collected on the spot, which, in Manhattanese parlance, would probably have been called a battery. Nor would the name have been altogether inappropriate, as a small battery was established there, and that, too, in a position which would easily throw a shot two-thirds of a league into the offing; or about the

distance that the stranger was now from the shore.

Tommaso Tonti was the oldest mariner of Elba, and, luckily, being a sober and usually a discreet man, he was the oracle of the island in most things which related to the sea. As each citizen, wine-dealer, grocer, innkeeper, or worker in iron came upon the height, he incontinently inquired for Tonti, or 'Maso, as he was generally called; and getting the bearings and distance of the grey-headed old seaman, he invariably made his way to his side, until a group of some two hundred men, women, and children had clustered near the person of the *pilota*, as the faithful gather about a favourite expounder of the law in moments of religious excitement. It was worthy of remark, too, with how much consideration this little crowd of gentle Italians treated their aged seaman on this occasion; none bawling out their questions, and all using the greatest care not to get in front of his person, lest they might intercept his means of observation. Five or six old sailors, like himself, were close at his side;

these, it is true, did not hesitate to speak as became their experience. But Tonti had obtained no small part of his reputation by exercising great moderation in delivering his oracles, and perhaps by seeming to know more than he actually revealed. He was reserved, therefore; and while his brethren of the sea ventured on sundry conflicting opinions concerning the character of the stranger, and a hundred idle conjectures had flown from mouth to mouth among the landsmen and females, not a syllable which could commit the old man had escaped his lips. He let the others talk at will; as for himself, it suited his habits, and possibly his difficulties in deciding, to maintain a grave and portentous silence.

We have spoken of females: as a matter of course an event like this, in a town of some three or four thousand souls, would be likely to draw a due proportion of the gentler sex to the heights. Most of them contrived to get as near as possible to the aged seaman in order to obtain the first intelligence, that it might be the sooner circulated; but it would seem that

among the younger of these, was also a sort of oracle of their own, about whose person gathered a dozen of the prettiest girls, either anxious to hear what Ghita might have to say in the premises, or perhaps influenced by the pride and modesty of their sex and condition, which taught them to maintain a little more reserve than was necessary to the less-refined portion of their companions. In speaking of condition, however, the word must be understood with an exceedingly limited meaning. Porto Ferrajo had but two classes of society,—the trades-people and the labourers; although there were, perhaps, a dozen exceptions, in the persons of a few humble functionaries of the government, an avvocato, a medico, and a few priests. The governor of the island was a Tuscan of rank, but he seldom honoured the place with his presence, and his deputy was a professional man, a native of the town, whose original position was too well known to allow him to give himself airs on the spot where he was born. Ghita's companions, then, were daughters of shopkeepers, and persons of that

class, who, having been taught to read, and occasionally going to Leghorn, beside being admitted by the deputy to the presence of his housekeeper, had got to regard themselves as a little elevated above the more vulgar curiosity of the less-cultivated girls of the port. Ghita herself, however, owed her ascendency to her qualities, rather than to the adventitious advantage of being a grocer's or an innkeeper's daughter, her origin being unknown to most of those around her, as indeed was her family name. She had been landed six weeks before, and left by one who passed for her father at the inn of Cristoforo Dovi, as a boarder, and had acquired all her influence, by the distinction of having travelled, aided somewhat by her strong sense, great decision of character, perfect modesty and propriety of deportment, with a form which was singularly graceful and feminine, and a face that, while it could scarcely be called beautiful, was, in the highest degree, winning and attractive. No one thought of asking her family name, and she never appeared to deem it necessary to

mention it. Ghita was sufficient—it was familiar to every one; and, although there were two or three others of the same appellation in Porto Ferrajo, this, by common consent, became *the* Ghita within a week after she had landed.

Ghita it was known had travelled, for she had publicly reached Elba in a felucca, coming, as was said, from the Neapolitan States. If this were true, she was probably the only person of her sex in the town who had ever seen Vesuvius, or planted her eyes on the wonders of a part of Italy, which has a reputation second only to that of Rome. Of course, if any girl in Porto Ferrajo could imagine the character of the stranger, it must be Ghita; and it was on this supposition that she had unwittingly, and, if the truth must be owned, unwillingly collected around her a *clientelle* of at least a dozen girls of her own age, and apparently of her own class. The latter, however, felt no necessity for the reserve maintained by the curious who pressed near 'Maso; for, while they respected their guest and friend

and would rather listen to her surmises than those of any other person, they had such a prompting desire to hear their own voices, that not a minute escaped without a question or a conjecture both volubly and quite audibly expressed. The interjections, too, were somewhat numerous, as the guesses were crude and absurd. One said it was a vessel with despatches from Livorno, possibly with "His Eccellenza" on board; but she was reminded that Leghorn lay to the north, and not to the west. Another thought it was a cargo of priests going from Corsica to Rome; but she was told that priests were not in sufficient favour just then in France to get a vessel so obviously superior to the ordinary craft of the Mediterranean, to carry them about. While a third, more imaginative than either, ventured to doubt whether it was a vessel at all: deceptive appearances of this sort not being of rare occurrence, and usually taking the aspect of something out of the ordinary way.

"*Sì*," said Annina, "but that would be a miracle, Maria; and why should we have a

miracle now that Lent and most of the holidays are past? *I* believe it is a real vessel."

The others laughed, and after a good deal of eager chattering on the subject it was very generally admitted that the stranger was a *bonâ fide* craft of some species or another, though all agreed she was not a felucca, a bombarda, or a sparanara. All this time Ghita was thoughtful and silent; quite as much so, indeed, as Tommaso himself, though from a very different motive. Notwithstanding all the gossip and the many ludicrous opinions of her companions, her eyes scarcely turned an instant from the lugger, on which they seemed to be riveted by a sort of fascination. Had there been one there sufficiently unoccupied to observe this interesting girl, he might have been struck with the varying expression of a countenance which was teeming with sensibility, and which too often reflected the passing emotions of its mistress's mind. Now an expression of anxiety, and even of alarm, would have been detected by such an observer, if acute enough to separate these emotions, in the

liveliness of sentiment, from the more vulgar feelings of her companions; and now, something like gleamings of delight and happiness flashed across her eloquent countenance. The colour came and went often; and there was an instant, during which the lugger varied her course, hauling to the wind, and then falling off again, like a dolphin at its sports, when the radiance of the pleasure that glowed about her soft blue eyes rendered the girl perfectly beautiful. But none of these passing expressions were noted by the garrulous group around the stranger female, who was left very much to the indulgence of the impulses that gave them birth, unquestioned and altogether unsuspected.

Although the cluster of girls had, with feminine sensitiveness, gathered a little apart from the general crowd, there were but a few yards between the spot where it stood and that occupied by 'Maso; so that when the latter spoke, an attentive listener among the former might hear his words. This was an office that Tonti did not choose to undertake, however,

until he was questioned by the podestà, Vito Viti, who now appeared on the hill in person, puffing like a whale which rises to breathe, from the vigour of his ascent.

"What dost thou make of her, good 'Maso?" demanded the magistrate, after he had examined the stranger himself some time in silence, feeling authorized, in virtue of his office, to question whom he pleased.

"Signore, it is a lugger," was the brief, and certainly the accurate reply.

"Ay, a lugger; we all understand that, neighbour Tonti; but what sort of a lugger? There are felucca-luggers, and polacre-luggers, and bombarda-luggers, and all sorts of luggers: which sort of lugger is this?"

"Signor Podestà, this is not the language of the port. We call a felucca, a felucca; a bombarda, a bombarda; a polacre, a polacre; and a lugger, a lugger. This is, therefore, a lugger."

'Maso spoke authoritatively, for he felt that he was now not out of his depth, and it was grateful to him to let the public know how

much better he understood all these matters than a magistrate. On the other hand, the podestà was nettled, and disappointed into the bargain, for he really imagined he was drawing nice distinctions, much as it was his wont to do in legal proceedings; and it was his ambition to be thought to know something of everything.

"Well, Tonti," answered Signor Viti, in a protecting manner, and with an affable smile, "as this is not an affair which is likely to go to the higher courts at Florence, your explanations may be taken as sufficient, and I have no wish to disturb them — a lugger, is a lugger."

"*Sì*, Signore: that is just what we say in the port. A lugger, is a lugger."

"And yonder strange craft, you maintain, and at need are ready to swear, is a lugger?"

Now 'Maso seeing no necessity for any oath in the affair, and being always somewhat conscientious in such matters, whenever the custom-house officers did not hold the book, was

a little startled at this suggestion, and he took another and a long look at the stranger before he answered.

"*Sì*, Signore," he replied, after satisfying his mind once more through his eyes, "I *will* swear that the stranger yonder is a lugger."

"And canst thou add, honest Tonti, of what nation? The *nation* is of as much moment, in these troubled times, as the *rig*."

"You say truly, Signor Podestà; for if an Algerine, or a Moor, or even a Frenchman, he will be an unwelcome visiter in the Canal of Elba. There are many different signs about him that sometimes make me think he belongs to one people, and then to another; and I crave your pardon, if I ask a little leisure to let him draw nearer before I give a positive opinion."

As this request was reasonable, no objection was raised. The podestà turned aside, and observing Ghita, who had visited his niece, and of whose intelligence he entertained a favourable opinion, he drew nearer to the girl,

determined to lose a moment in dignified trifling.

"Honest 'Maso, poor fellow, is sadly puzzled," he observed, smiling benevolently, as if in pity for the pilot's embarrassment; "he wishes to persuade us that the strange craft yonder is a lugger, though he cannot himself say to what country she belongs!"

"It is a lugger, Signore," returned the girl, drawing a long breath, as if relieved by hearing the sound of her own voice.

"How! dost thou pretend to be so skilled in vessels as to distinguish these particulars at the distance of a league?"

"I do not think it a league, Signore—not more than half a league; and the distance lessens fast, though the wind is so light. As for knowing a lugger from a felucca, it is as easy as to know a house from a church; or one of the reverend padri in the streets, from a mariner."

"Ay, so I would have told 'Maso on the spot, had the obstinate old fellow been inclined to hear me. The distance is just about what

you say; and nothing is easier than to see that the stranger is a lugger. As to the nation?—"

"That may not be so easily told, Signore, unless the vessel show us her flag."

"By San Antonio! thou art right, child; and it is fitting she should show us her flag. Nothing has a right to approach so near the port of his Imperial and Royal Highness that does not show its flag, thereby declaring its honest purpose, and its nation. My friends, are the guns in the battery loaded, as usual?"

The answer being in the affirmative, there was a hurried consultation among some of the principal men in the crowd, and then the podestà walked towards the government-house with an important air. In five minutes soldiers were seen in the batteries, and preparations were made for levelling an eighteen-pounder in the direction of the stranger. Most of the females turned aside, and stopped their ears, the battery being within an hundred yards of the spot where they stood; but Ghita, with a face that was pale, certainly,

though with an eye that was steady, and without the least indications of fear as respected herself, intensely watched every movement. When it was evident that the artillerists were about to fire anxiety induced her to break silence.

"They surely will not aim *at* the lugger!" she exclaimed. "*That* cannot be necessary, Signor Podestà, to make the stranger hoist his flag. Never have I seen *that* done in the south."

"You are unacquainted with our Tuscan bombardiers, Signorina," answered the magistrate, with a bland smile and an exulting gesture. "It is well for Europe that the grand duchy is so small, since such troops might prove even more troublesome than the French!"

Ghita, however, paid no attention to this touch of provincial pride; but pressing her hands on her heart, she stood like a statue of suspense, while the men in the battery executed their duty. In a minute the match was applied, and the gun was discharged. Though

all her companions uttered invocations to the saints, and other exclamations, and some even crouched to the earth in terror, Ghita, the most delicate of any, in appearance, and with more real sensibility than all united expressed in her face, stood firm and erect. The flash and the explosion evidently had no effect on her; not an artillerist among them was less unmoved in frame at the report than this slight girl. She even imitated the manner of the soldiers, by turning to watch the flight of the shot, though she clasped her hands as she did so, and appeared to await the result with trembling. The few seconds of suspense were soon past, when the ball was seen to strike the water full a quarter of a mile astern of the lugger, and to skip along the placid sea for twice that distance further, when it sunk to the bottom by its own gravity.

"Santa Maria be praised!" murmured the girl, a smile, half pleasure half irony, lighting her face, as unconsciously to herself she spoke, "These Tuscan artillerists are no fatal marksmen!"

"That was most dexterously done, bella Ghita!" exclaimed the magistrate, removing his two hands from his ears; "that was amazingly well aimed! Another such shot as far ahead, with a third fairly between the two, and the stranger will learn to respect the rights of Tuscany. What say'st thou now, honest 'Maso — will this lugger tell us her country, or will she further brave our power?"

"If wise, she will hoist her ensign; and yet I see no signs of preparation for such an act."

Sure enough, the stranger, though quite within effective range of shot from the heights, showed no disposition to gratify the curiosity, or to appease the apprehensions, of those in the town. Two or three of her people were visible in her rigging, but even these did not hasten their work, or in any manner seem deranged at the salutation they had just received. After a few minutes, however, the lugger jibed her mainsail, and then hauled up a little so as to look more towards the head-land, as if disposed to steer for the bay by doubling the promontory. This movement caused the ar-

tillerists to suspend their own, and the lugger had fairly come within a mile of the cliffs before she lazily turned aside again, and shaped her course once more in the direction of the entrance of the canal. This drew another shot, which effectually justified the magistrate's eulogy, for it certainly flew as much ahead of the stranger as the first had flown astern.

"There, Signore," cried Ghita, eagerly, as she turned to the magistrate, "they are about to hoist their ensign, for now they know your wishes. The soldiers surely will not fire again!"

"That would be in the teeth of the law of nations, Signorina, and a blot on Tuscan civilization. Ah! you perceive the artillerists are aware of what you say, and are putting aside their tools. Cospetto! 'tis a thousand pities, too, they couldn't fire the third shot, that you might see it strike the lugger; as yet, you have only beheld their preparations."

"It is enough, Signor Podestà," returned Ghita, smiling, for she could smile now that she saw the soldiers intended no further mis-

chief; "we have all heard of your Elba gunners, and what I *have* seen convinces me of what they can do when there is occasion. Look, Signore! the lugger is about to satisfy our curiosity."

Sure enough, the stranger saw fit to comply with the usages of nations. It has been said already, that the lugger was coming down before the wind wing-and-wing, or with a sail expanded to the air on each side of her hull, a disposition of the canvass that gives to the felucca, and to the lugger in particular, the most picturesque of all their graceful attitudes. Unlike the narrow-headed sails which a want of hands has introduced among ourselves, these foreign, we might almost say classical, mariners send forth their long pointed yards aloft, confining the width below by the necessary limits of the sheet, making up for the difference in elevation by the greater breadth of their canvass. The idea of the felucca's sails, in particular, would seem to have been literally taken from the wing of the large sea-fowl, the shape so nearly corresponding, that,

with the canvass spread in the manner just mentioned, one of those light craft has a very close resemblance to the gull or the hawk as it poises itself in the air, or is swooping down upon its prey. The lugger has less of the beauty which adorns a picture, perhaps, than the strictly latine rig; but it approaches so near it as to be always pleasing to the eye, and, in the particular evolution described, is scarcely less attractive. To the seaman, however, it brings with it an air of greater service, being a mode of carrying canvass that will buffet with the heaviest gales, or the roughest seas, while it appears so pleasant to the eye in the blandest airs and smoothest water.

The lugger now beneath the heights of Elba had three masts, though sails were spread only on the two which were forward. The third mast was stepped on the taffrail; it was small, and carried a little sail which, in English, is termed a jigger, its principal use being to press the bows of the craft up to the wind when close hauled, and render her what is termed weatherly. On the present

occasion, there could scarcely be said to be anything deserving the name of wind, though Ghita felt her cheek, which was warmed with the rich blood of her country, fanned by an air so gentle that occasionally it blew aside tresses which seemed to vie with the floss silk of her native land. Had the natural ringlets been less light, however, so gentle a respiration of the sea air could scarcely have disturbed them. But the lugger had her lightest duck spread — reserving the heavier canvass for the storms—and it opened like the folds of a balloon even before these gentle impulses; occasionally collapsing, it is true, as the ground-swell swung the yards to and fro, but, on the whole, standing out and receiving the air as if guided more by volition than any mechanical power. The effect on the hull was almost magical; for, notwithstanding the nearly imperceptible force of the propelling power, owing to the lightness and exquisite mould of the craft, it served to urge her through the water at the rate of some three or four knots in the hour; or quite as fast as an

ordinarily active man is apt to walk. Her motion was nearly unobservable to all on board, and might rather be termed gliding than sailing, the ripple under her cut-water not much exceeding that which is made by the finger as it is moved swiftly through the element; still the slightest variation of the helm changed her course, and this so easily and gracefully as to render her deviations and inclinations like those of the duck. In her present situation, too, the jigger, which was brailed, and hung festooned from its light yard ready for use, should occasion suddenly demand it, added singularly to the smart air which everything wore about this craft, giving her, in the seaman's eyes, that particularly knowing and suspicious look which had awakened 'Maso's distrust.

The preparations to show the ensign, which had caught the quick and understanding glance of Ghita, and which had not escaped even the duller vision of the artillerists, were made at the outer end of this jigger-yard. A boy had appeared on the taffrail, and he was evidently

clearing the ensign-halyards for that purpose. In half a minute, however, he disappeared, and then a flag rose steadily, and by a continued pull, to its station. At first the bunting hung suspended in a line, so as to evade all examination; but, as if everything on board this light craft were on a scale as airy and buoyant as herself, the folds soon expanded, showing a white field traversed at right angles with a red cross, and having a union of the same tint in its upper and inner corner.

"*Inglese!*" exclaimed 'Maso, infinitely aided in this conjecture by the sight of the stranger's ensign—"Sì, Signore; it is an Englishman; I *thought* so, from the first, but as the lugger is not a common rig for vessels of that nation, I did not like to risk anything by saying it."

"Well, honest Tommaso, it is a happiness to have a mariner as skilful as yourself, in these troublesome times, at one's elbow! I do not know how else we should ever have found out the stranger's country. An Inglese! Corpo di Bacco! Who would have thought that a nation so maritime, and which

lies so far off, would send so small a craft this vast distance! Why, Ghita, it is a voyage from Elba to Livorno, and yet, I dare say, England is twenty times farther."

"Signore, I know little of England, but I have heard that it lies beyond our own sea. This is the flag of the country, however; for *that* have I often beheld. Many ships of that nation come upon the coast further south."

"Yes, it is a great country for mariners; though they tell me it has neither wine nor oil. They are allies of the emperor, too, and deadly enemies of the French, who have done so much harm in upper Italy. That is something, Ghita, and every Italian should honour the flag. I fear this stranger does not intend to enter our harbour!"

"He steers as if he did not, certainly, Signor Podestà," said Ghita, sighing so gently that the respiration was audible only to herself. "Perhaps he is in search of some of the French, of whom they say so many were seen, last year, going east."

"Ay, that was truly an enterprise!" answered the magistrate, gesticulating on a large scale, and opening his eyes by way of accompaniments. "General Bonaparte, he who had been playing the devil in the Milanese and the States of the Pope for the last two years, sailed, they sent us word, with two or three hundred ships, the Saints, at first, knew whither! Some said, it was to destroy the Holy Sepulchre; some, to overturn the Grand Turk; and some thought, to seize the Islands. There was a craft in here, the same week, which said he had got possession of the island of Malta; in which case we might look out for trouble in Elba. I had my suspicions from the first!"

"All this I heard at the time, Signore, and my uncle probably could tell you more —how we all felt at the tidings!"

"Well, that is all over now, and the French are in Egypt. Your uncle, Ghita, has gone upon the main, I hear?" this was said inquiringly, and it was intended to be said carelessly; but the podestà could not prevent

a glance of suspicion from accompanying the question.

"Signore, I believe he has; but I know little of his affairs. The time has come, however, when I ought to expect him. See, eccellenza!"—a title that never failed to mollify the magistrate, and turn his attention from others entirely to himself—"the lugger really appears disposed to look into your bay, if not actually to enter it!"

This sufficed to change the discourse. Nor was it said altogether without reason; the lugger, which by this time had passed the western promontory, actually appearing disposed to do as Ghita conjectured. She had jibed her main-sail, brought both sheets of canvass on her larboard side, and luffed a little so as to cause her head to look towards the opposite side of the bay, instead of standing in, as before, in the direction of the canal. This change in the lugger's course produced a general movement in the crowd, which began to quit the heights, hastening to descend the terraced streets, in order to

reach the haven. 'Maso and the podestà led the van in this descent; and the girls, with Ghita in the midst, followed with equal curiosity, but with eager steps. By the time the throng was assembled on the quays, in the streets, on the decks of feluccas, or at other points that commanded the view, the stranger was seen gliding past, in the centre of the wide and deep bay, with his jigger hauled out, and his sheets aft, looking up nearly into the wind's eye, if that could be called wind which was still little more than the sighing of the classical zephyr. His motion was necessarily slow, but it continued light, easy, and graceful. After passing the entrance of the port a mile or more, he tacked and looked up towards the haven. By this time, however, he had got so near in to the western cliffs that their lee deprived him of all air; and after keeping his canvass open half an hour in the little roads, it was all suddenly drawn to the yards, and the lugger anchored.

CHAPTER II.

His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,
With much to learn, but nothing to impart;
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.

COWPER.

IT was now nearly dark, and the crowd, having satisfied its idle curiosity, began slowly to disperse. The Signor Viti remained till the last, conceiving it to be his duty to be on the alert in such troubled times; but with all his bustling activity it escaped his vigilance and means of observation to detect the circumstance that the stranger, who, while he steered into the bay with so much confidence, had contrived to bring up at a point where not a single gun from the batteries could be brought to bear on him; while his own shot, had he been disposed to hostility, would have com-

pletely raked the little haven. But Vito Viti, though so enthusiastic an admirer of the art, was no gunner himself, and little liked to dwell on the effect of shot, except as it applied to others and not at all to himself.

Of all the suspicious, apprehensive, and curious who had been collected in and about the port since it was known the lugger intended to come into the bay, Ghita and 'Maso alone remained on watch after the vessel anchored. A loud hail had been given by those entrusted with the execution of the quarantine laws, the great physical bug-bear and moral mystification of the Mediterranean; and the questions put had been answered in a way to satisfy all scruples for the moment. The "From whence came ye?" asked, however, in an Italian idiom, had been answered by "Inghilterra, touching at Lisbon and Gibraltar," all regions beyond distrust, as to the plague, and all happening at that moment to give clean bills of health. But the name of the craft herself had been given in a way to puzzle all the proficients in Saxon English that Porto Ferrajo could

produce. It had been distinctly enough pronounced by some one on board, and at the request of the quarantine department had been three times slowly repeated, very much after the following form: viz.

"*Come chiamate il vostro bastimento?*"

"The Wing-and-Wing."

"*Come?*"

"The Wing-and-Wing."

A long pause, during which the officials put their heads together, first to compare the sounds of each with those of his companions' ears, and then to inquire of one who professed to understand English, but whose knowledge was such as is generally met with in a linguist of a little-frequented port, the meaning of the term.

"Ving-y-ving!" growled this functionary, not a little puzzled, "what ze devil sort of name is zat! Ask zem again."

"*Come si chiama la vostra barca, Signori Inglesi?*" repeated he who hailed.

"*Diable!*" growled one back, in French, "she is called ze Wing-and-Wing, 'Ala e

Ala,'" giving a very literal translation of the name, in Italian.

"*Ala e ala!*" repeated they of the quarantine, first looking at each other in surprise, and then laughing, though in a perplexed and doubtful manner; "Ving-y-Ving!"

This passed just as the lugger anchored, and the crowd had begun to disperse. It caused some merriment, and it was soon spread in the little town that a craft had just arrived from Inghilterra, whose name, in the dialect of that island, was "Ving-y-Ving;" which meant "*Ala e ala*," in Italian; a cognomen that struck the listeners as sufficiently absurd. In confirmation of the fact, however, the lugger hoisted a small square flag, at the end of her main-yard, on which were painted, or wrought, two large wings, as they are sometimes delineated in heraldry, with the beak of a galley between them; giving the whole conceit something very like the appearance which the human imagination has assigned to those heavenly beings, cherubs. This emblem seemed to satisfy the minds of the observers, who were too much

accustomed to the images of art not to obtain some tolerably distinct notions, in the end, of what "*Ala e ala*" meant.

But 'Maso, as has been said, remained after the rest had departed to their homes and their suppers, as did Ghita. The pilot, for such was Tonti's usual appellation, in consequence of his familiarity with the coast, and his being principally employed to direct the navigation of the different craft in which he served, kept his station on board a felucca to which he belonged, watching the movements of the lugger, while the girl had taken her stand on the quay, in a position which better became her sex, since it removed her from immediate contact with the rough spirits of the port, while it enabled her to see what occurred about the Wing-and-Wing. More than half an hour elapsed, however, before there were any signs of an intention to land; but by the time it was dark a boat was ready, and it was seen making its way to the common stairs, where one or two of the regular officials were ready to receive it.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the forms of the *pratique* officers. These troublesome persons had their lanterns, and were vigilant in examining papers, as is customary; but it would seem the mariner in the boat had everything *en règle*, for he was soon suffered to land. At this instant Ghita passed near the group, and took a close and keen survey of the stranger's form and face, her own person being so enveloped in a mantle, as to render a recognition of it difficult, if not impossible. The girl seemed satisfied with this scrutiny, for she immediately disappeared. Not so with 'Maso, who by this time had hurried round from the felucca, and was at the stairs in season to say a word to the stranger.

"Signore," said the pilot, "his eccellenza, the podestà, has bidden me say to you that, he expects the honour of your company at his house, which stands so near us, hard by here, in the principal street, as will make it only a pleasure to go there; I know he would be disappointed if he failed of the happiness of seeing you."

"Guernsey is a country I never heard of," answered 'Maso, simply; "is it like Holland —or more like Lisbon?"

"Very little of either. Guernsey is a country that was once French, and where many of the people still speak the French language, but of which the English have been masters this many an age. It is an island subject to King George, but which is still half Gallic in names and usages. This is the reason why we like the lugger better than the cutter, which is a more English rig."

'Maso was silent, for, if true, the answer at once removed many misgivings. He had seen so much about the strange craft which struck him as French, that doubts of her character had obtruded; but, if her captain's account could only be substantiated, there was an end of distrust. What could be more natural than the circumstance that a vessel fitted out in an island of French origin, should betray some of the peculiarities of the people who built her?

The podestà was at home, in expectation of

"His eccellenza is a man not to be disappointed," returned the stranger, in very good Italian, "and five minutes shall prove to him how eager I am to salute him;" then turning to the crew of his boat, he ordered them to return on board the lugger, and not to fail to look out for the signal by which he might call them ashore.

'Maso, as he led the way to the dwelling of Vito Viti, would fain ask a few questions, in the hope of appeasing certain doubts that beset him.

"Since when, Signor Capitano," he inquired, "have you English taken to sailing luggers? It is a novel rig for one of your craft."

"Corpo di Bacco!" answered the other, laughing, "friend of mine, if you can tell the precise day when brandy and laces were first smuggled from France into my country, I will answer your question. I think you have never navigated as far north as the Bay of Biscay and our English Channel, or you would know that a Guernsey-man is better acquainted with the rig of a lugger than with that of a ship."

this visit, and 'Maso was first admitted to a private conference, leaving the stranger in an outer room. During this brief conference, the pilot communicated all he had to say—both his suspicions and the seeming solution of the difficulties; and then he took his leave, after receiving the boon of a paul. Vito Viti now joined his guest, but it was so dark, lights not having yet been introduced, that neither could distinguish the other's countenance.

"Signor Capitano," observed the magistrate, "the deputy-governor is at his residence on the hill, and he will expect me to do him the favour to bring you thither, that he may do you the honours of the port."

This was said so civilly, and was, in itself, both so reasonable and so much in conformity with usage, that the other had not a word to say against it. Together, then, they left the house, and proceeded towards the government-dwelling—a building which has since become celebrated as having been the residence of a soldier who so nearly succeeded in subjugating Europe. Vito Viti was a short, pursy man,

and he took his time to ascend the stairs-resembling street; but his companion stepped from terrace to terrace with an ease and activity which, of themselves, would have declared him to be young, had not this been made apparent by his general bearing and his mien, as seen through the obscurity.

Andrea Barrofaldi, the vice-governor, was a very different sort of person from his friend the podestà. Although little more acquainted with the world by practice, the vice-governor was deeply read in books, owing his situation, in short, to the circumstance of his having written several clever works, of no great reputation certainly for genius, but which were useful in their way, and manifested scholarship. It is very seldom that a man of mere letters is qualified for public life; and yet there is an affectation in all governments, most especially in those which care so little for literature in general as to render some professions of respect for it necessary to their own characters, of protecting it; and thus it is that in the United States, where the laws are so indif-

ferent to the *rights* and interests of men of this class as to subject them to costs and penalties in the prosecution of their ordinary labours, that no other Christian nation dreams of exacting, we hear high-sounding pretensions to this species of liberality, although the system of rewards and punishments* that prevails usually requires that its beneficiary should first *rat*, in order to prove his adaptation to the duty. Andrea Barrofaldi, however, had thrown no political summerset, and had consequently been

* So much is said in the American journals concerning the patronage the public bestows on letters,—a patronage which is very much confined to buying such works as the reader wants, and not purchasing those for which he feels no occasion, that it forcibly reminds one of the story of the Creole woman, who was descanting on the subject of ruling negroes among some friends. "If you will gouverne négres," she said, "you moost have système. I have système. Mon système à moi, is système of reward and poonish*ment*." Then she turns to her negroes, and addresses them, desiring her friends to note the effect. "*Mes amis*," she begins, "zo-morrow ze cane will be roipe, and you moost moosh vork. You know me—you know mon système,—it is système of reward and poonishment. If you shall not vork, you *shall* be flog; zat is poonishment; mais if you shall *very* moosh—*very* moosh vork, you shall *no* be flog—zat is ze reward!"

inducted into his present office without even the sentimental profession of never having asked for it. The situation had been given to him by the Fossombrone of his day without a word having been said in the journals of Tuscany, of his doubts about accepting it, and everything passed, as things are apt to pass when there are true simplicity and good faith at the bottom, without pretension or comment. He had now been ten years in office, and had become exceedingly expert in discharging all the ordinary functions of his post, which he certainly did with zeal and fidelity. Still he did not desert his beloved books; and, quite *à propos* of the matter about to come before him, the Signor Barrofaldi had just finished a severe, profound, and extensive course of study in geography.

The stranger was left in the ante-chamber, while Vito Viti entered an inner room, and had a short communication with his friend, the vice-governor. As soon as this was ended, the former returned, and ushered his companion into the presence of the substitute for a

grand-duke, if not for a king. As this was the sailor's first appearance within the influence of a light sufficiently strong to enable the podestà to examine his person, both he and Andrea Barrofaldi turned their eyes on him with lively curiosity the instant the rays of a strong lamp enabled them to scrutinise his appearance. Neither was disappointed, in one sense at least; the countenance, figure, and mien of the mariner much more than equalling his expectations.

The stranger was a man of six-and-twenty, who stood five feet ten in his stockings, and whose frame was the very figure of activity, united to a muscle that gave very fair indications of strength. He was attired in an undress naval uniform, which he wore with a smart air, that one who understood these matters more by means of experience, and less by means of books, than Andrea Barrofaldi, would at once have detected did not belong to the manly simplicity of the English wardrobe. Nor were his features in the slightest degree those of one of the islanders, the outline being

beautifully classical, more especially about the mouth and chin, while the cheeks were colourless, and the skin swarthy. His eye, too, was black as jet, and his cheek was half covered in whiskers of a hue dark as the raven's wing. His face, as a whole, was singularly beautiful—for handsome is a word not strong enough to express all the character that was conveyed by a conformation that might be supposed to have been copied from some antique medal, more especially when illuminated by a smile which at times rendered the whole countenance almost as bewitching as that of a lovely woman. There was nothing effeminate in the appearance of the young stranger, notwithstanding; his manly though sweet voice, well-knit frame, and firm look, affording every pledge of resolution and spirit.

Both the vice-governor and the podestà were struck with the unusual personal advantages and smart air of the stranger, and each stood looking at him half-a-minute in silence, after the usual salutations had passed, and before the party was seated. Then, as the three took

chairs, on a motion from Signor Barrofaldi, the latter opened the discourse.

"They tell me that we have the honour to receive into our little haven a vessel of Inghilterra, Signor Capitano," observed the vice-governor, earnestly regarding the other through his spectacles as he spoke, and that, too, in a manner not altogether free from distrust.

"Signor Vice-governatore, such is the flag under which I have the honour to serve," returned the mariner.

"You are an Inglese yourself, I trust, Signor Capitano — what name shall I enter in my book, here?"

"Jaques Smeet," answered the other, betraying what might have proved two very fatal shibboleths in the ears of those who were practised in the finesse of our very unmusical language, by attempting to say "Jack Smith."

"Jaques Smeet!" repeated the vice-governor, —"that is, Giacomo, in our Italian —"

"No — no — Signore," hastily interrupted Captain Smeet, "not Jaqueomo, but Jaques—

Giovanni, tûrned into Jaques by the aid of a little salt water."

"Ah! I begin to understand you, Signore; you English have this usage in your language, though *you* have softened the word a little, in mercy to our ears. But we Italians are not afraid of such sounds; and I know the name. — 'Giac Smeet' — Il Capitano Giac Smeet — I have long suspected my English master of ignorance, for he was merely one of our Leghorn pilots, who has sailed in a bastimento de guerra of your country—he called your honourable name 'Smees,' Signore."

"He was very wrong, Signor Vice-governatore," answered the other, clearing his throat by a slight effort; "we always call our family 'Smeet.'"

"And the name of your lugger, Signor Capitano Smeet?" suspending his pen over the paper in expectation of the answer.

"Ze Ving-and-Ving"—pronouncing the *w*s in a very different way from what they had been sounded in answering the hails.

"Ze Ving-y-Ving," repeated Signor Barro-

faldi, writing the name in a manner to show that it was not the first time he had heard it; "ze Ving-y-Ving; that is a poetical appellation, Signor Capitano; may I presume to ask what it signifies?"

"*Ala e ala*, in your Italian, *Mister* Vice-governatore. When a craft like mine has a sail spread on each side, resembling a bird, we say, in English, that she marches 'Ving-and-Ving.'"

Andrea Barrofaldi mused, in silence, near a minute. During this interval, he was thinking of the improbability of any but a *bonâ fide* Englishman dreaming of giving a vessel an appellation so thoroughly idiomatic, and was fast mystifying himself, as so often happens with tyros in any particular branch of knowledge, by his own critical acumen. Then he half whispered a conjecture on the subject to Vito Viti, influenced quite as much by a desire to show his neighbour his own readiness in such matters, as by any other feeling. The podestà was less struck by the distinction than his superior; but, as became one of his limited means, he did not venture an objection.

" Signor Capitano," resumed Andrea Barrofaldi, " since when have you English adopted the rig of the lugger? It is an unusual craft for so great a naval nation, they tell me."

" Bah! I see how it is, Signor Vice-governatore,—you suspect me of being a Frenchman, or a Spaniard, or something else than I claim to be. On this head, however, you may set your heart at rest, and put full faith in what I tell you. My name is Capitaine Jaques Smeet; my vessel is ze Ving-and-Ving; and my service that of the King of England."

" Is your craft, then, a king's vessel?— or does she sail with the commission of a corsair?"

" Do I look like a corsair, Signor?" demanded le Capitaine Smeet, with an offended air; " I have reason to feel myself injured by so unworthy an imputation!"

" Your pardon, Signor Capitano Smees,— but our duty is a very delicate one on this unprotected island, in times so troubled as these in which we live. It has been stated to me, as coming from the most experienced pilot of our haven, that your lugger has not alto-

gether the appearance of a vessel of the Inglese, while she has many points that belong to the corsairs of France; and a prudent caution imposes on me the office of making certain of your nation. Once assured of that, it will be the delight of the Elbans to prove how much we honour and esteem our illustrious allies."

"This is so reasonable, and so much according to what I do myself, when I meet a stranger at sea," cried the captain, stretching forth both arms in a frank and inviting manner, "that none but a knave would object to it. Pursue your own course, Signor Vice-governatore, and satisfy all your scruples in your own manner. How shall this be done? — will you go on board ze Ving-and-Ving and look for yourself — send this honourable magistrate — or shall I show you my commission? Here is the last, altogether at your service, and that of his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke."

"I flatter myself with having sufficient knowledge of Inghilterra, Signor Capitano, though it be by means of books, to discover an impostor, could I believe you capable of

appearing in so unworthy a character, and that, too, in a very brief conversation. We book-worms," added Andrea Barrofaldi, with a glance of triumph at his neighbour, for he now expected to give the podestà an illustration of the practical benefits of general learning, (a subject that had often been discussed between them,) "we book-worms, can manage these trifles in our own way; and if you will consent to enter into a short dialogue on the subject of England, her habits, language, and laws, this question will be speedily put at rest."

"You have me at command, and nothing would delight me more than to chat for a few minutes about that little island. It is not large, Signore, and is, doubtless, of little worth; but, as my country, it is much in my eyes."

"This is natural. And now, Signor Capitano," added Andrea, glancing at the podestà to make sure that he was listening, "will you have the goodness to explain to me what sort of a government this Inghilterra possesses,

— whether monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy?"

"Peste!—that is not so easily answered. There is a king, and yet there are powerful lords; and a democracy, too, that sometimes gives trouble enough. Your question might puzzle a philosopher, Signor Vice-governatore."

"This may be true enough, neighbour Vito Viti, for the constitution of Inghilterra is an instrument of many strings. Your answer convinces me that you have thought on the subject of your government, Capitano, and I honour a reflecting man in all situations in life. What is the religion of the country?"

"Corpo di Bacco!—that is harder to answer than all the rest. We have as many religions in England as we have people. It is true the law says one thing on this head, but then the men, women, and children, say another. Nothing has troubled me more than this same matter of religion."

"Ah! you sailors do not disquiet your souls with such thoughts, if the truth must be said.

Well, we will be indulgent on this subject, — though, out of doubt, you and all your people are *Luterani?*"

"Set us down as what you please," answered the captain, with an ironical smile. "Our fathers, at any rate, were all good Catholics once. But seamanship and the altar are the best of friends, living quite independent of each other."

"That I will answer for. It is much the same here, caro Vito Viti, though our mariners do burn so many lamps and offer up so many *aves*."

"Your pardon, Signor Vice-governatore," interrupted the Signor Smeet, with a little earnestness; "this is the great mistake of your seamen in general. Did they pray less and look to their duties more, their voyages would be shorter, and the profits more certain."

"Scandalous!" exclaimed the podestà, in hotter zeal than it was usual for him to betray.

"Nay, worthy Vito Viti, it is even so," interrupted the deputy, with a wave of the hand, which was as authoritative as the concession was liberal and indicative of a spirit enlightened

by study; "the fact must be conceded. There is the fable of Hercules and the waggoner to confirm it. Did our men first strive, and then pray, more would be done than by first praying and then striving;— and now, Signor Capitano, a word on your language, of which I have some small knowledge, and which, doubtless, you speak like a native."

"Sairtain*lee*," answered the captain, with perfect self-composure, changing the form of speech from the Italian to the English with a readiness that proved how strong he felt himself on this point; "one cannot fail to speak ze tongue of his own mozair."

This was said without any confusion of manner, and with an accent that might very well mislead a foreigner, and it sounded imposing to the vice-governor, who felt a secret consciousness that he could not have uttered such a sentence to save his own life, without venturing out of his depth: therefore, he pursued the discourse in Italian.

"Your language, Signore," observed An-

drea Barrofaldi, with warmth, "is no doubt a very noble one; for the language in which Shakspeare and Milton wrote, cannot be else; but, you will permit me to say that it has a uniformity of sound with words of different letters, which I find as unreasonable as it is embarrassing to a foreigner."

"I have heard such complaints before," answered the captain, not at all sorry to find the examination, which had proved so awkward to himself, likely to be transferred to a language about which he cared not at all, "and have little to say in its defence. But, as an example of what you mean —"

"Why, Signore, here are several words that I have written on this bit of paper, which sound nearly alike, though, as you perceive, they are quite differently spelled. Bix, bax, box, bux, and bocks," continued Andrea, endeavouring to pronounce, "big," "bag," "bog," "bug," and "box," all of which, it seemed to him, had a very close family resemblance in sound, though certainly spelled with different

letters; "these are words, Signore, that are enough to drive a foreigner to abandon your tongue in despair."

"Indeed they are; and I often told the person who taught me the language—"

"How! did you not learn your own tongue as we all get our native forms of speech, by ear, when a child?" demanded the vice-governor, his suspicions suddenly revived.

"Without question, Signore; but I speak of books, and of learning to read. When 'big,' 'bag,' 'bug,' 'bog,' and 'box,'" reading from the paper in a steady voice, and a very tolerable pronunciation, "first came before me, I felt all the embarrassment of which you speak."

"And did you only pronounce these words when first taught to read them?"

This question was an awkward one to answer; but Vito Viti began to weary of a discourse in which he could take no part, and, most opportunely, he interposed an objection of his own.

"Signor Barrofaldi," he said, "stick to the

lugger. All our motives of suspicion came from Tommaso Tonti, and all of his from the rig of Signor Smees' vessel. If the lugger can be explained, what do we care about bixy, buxy, boxy!"

The vice-governor was not sorry to get creditably out of the difficulties of the language, and, smiling on his friend, he made a gentle bow of compliance. Then he reflected a moment in order to plan another mode of proceeding, and pursued the inquiry.

"My neighbour Vito Viti is right," he said, "and we will stick to the lugger. Tommaso Tonti is a mariner of experience, and the oldest pilot of Elba. He tells us that the lugger is a craft much in use among the French, and not at all among the English so far as he has ever witnessed."

"In that Tommaso Tonti is no seaman. Many luggers are to be found among the English; though more, certainly, among the French. But I have already given the Signor Viti to understand that there is such an island as Guernsey, which was once French, but which

is now English, and that accounts for the appearances he has observed. We are Guernseymen—the lugger is from Guernsey—and, no doubt, we have a Guernsey look. This is being half French, I allow."

"That alters the matter altogether. Neighbour Viti, this is all true about the island, and about its habits and its origin; and if one could be as certain about the names, why nothing more need be said. Are Giac Smees and Ving-y-Ving Guernsey names?"

"They are not particularly so," returned the sailor, with difficulty refraining from laughing in the vice-governor's face; "Jaques Smeet being so English, that we are the largest family, perhaps, in all Inghilterra. Half the nobles of the island are called 'Smeet,' and not a few are named 'Jaques.' But little Guernsey was conquered; and our ancestors, who performed that office, brought their names with them, Signore. As for Ving-and-Ving, it is *capital* English."

"I do not see, Vito, but this is reasonable. If the capitano, now, only had his commission

with him, you and I might go to bed in peace, and sleep till morning."

"Here, then, Signore, are your sleeping potions," continued the laughing sailor, drawing from his pocket several papers. "These are my orders from the admiral; and, as they are not secret, you can cast your eyes over them. This is my commission, Signor Vice-governatore—this is the signature of the English minister of marine—and here is my own, 'Jaques Smeet,' as you see, and here is the order to me, as a lieutenant, to take command of the Ving-and-Ving."

All the orders and names were there, certainly, written in a clear, fair hand, and in perfectly good English. The only thing that one who understood the language perfectly would have been apt to advert to, was the circumstance that the words which the sailor pronounced "Jaques Smeet," were written, plainly enough, "Jack Smith,"—an innovation on the common practice, which, to own the truth, had proceeded from his own obstinacy, and had been done in the very teeth of the objections of the

scribe who had forged the papers. But Andrea was still too little of an English scholar to understand the blunder, and the "Jack" passed with him quite as currently as would "John," "Edward," or any other appellation. As to the Wing-and-Wing, all was right; though, as the words were pointed out and pronounced by both parties, one pertinaciously insisted on calling them "Ving-and-Ving," and the other, "Ving-y-Ving." All this evidence had a great tendency towards smoothing down every difficulty, and 'Maso Tonti's objections were pretty nearly forgotten by both the Italians, when the papers were returned to, and pocketed again by, their proper owner.

"It was an improbable thing that an enemy, or a corsair, would venture into this haven of ours, Vito Viti," said the vice-governor, in a self-approving manner; "for we have a reputation for being vigilant, and for knowing our business as well as the authorities of Livorno, or Genova, or Napoli."

"And that too, Signore, with nothing in the world to gain but hard knocks and a prison,"

added the Captain Smeet, with one of his most winning smiles—a smile that even softened the heart of the podestà, while it so far warmed that of his superior as to induce him to invite the stranger to share his own frugal supper. The invitation was accepted as frankly as it had been given; and, the table being ready in an adjoining room, in a few minutes Il Capitano Smees and Vito Viti were sharing the vice-governor's evening meal.

From this moment, if distrust existed any longer in the breasts of the two functionaries of Porto Ferrajo, it was so effectually smothered as to be known only to themselves. The light fare of an Italian kitchen and the light wines of Tuscany just served to strengthen the system, and enliven the spirits; the conversation becoming general and lively, as the business of the moment proceeded. At that day tea was known throughout southern Europe as an ingredient only for the apothecary's keeping; nor was it often to be found among his stores; and the *convives*, used as a substitute, large draughts of the pleasant mountain liquors

of the adjacent main, which produced an excitement scarcely greater, while it may be questioned if it did as much injury to the health. The stranger, however, both eat and drank sparingly; for, while he affected to join cordially in the discourse and the business of *restoration*, he greatly desired to be at liberty to pursue his own designs.

Andrea Barrofaldi did not let so excellent an opportunity to show his acquirements to the podestà go by neglected. He talked much of England, its history, religion, government, laws, climate, and industry; making frequent appeals to the Capitano Smees for the truth of his opinions. In most cases the parties agreed surprisingly, for the stranger started with a deliberate intention to assent to everything; but even this compliant temper had its embarrassments, since the vice-governor so put his interrogatories as occasionally to give to acquiescence the appearance of dissent. The other floundered through his difficulties tolerably well, notwithstanding; and so successful was he in particular in flattering An-

drea's self-love by expressions of astonishment that a foreigner should understand his own country so well—better, indeed, in many respects than he understood it himself—and that he should be so familiar with its habits, institutions, and geography, that by the time the flask was emptied, the superior functionary whispered to his inferior, that the stranger manifested so much information and good sense he should not be surprised if he turned out, in the long-run, to be some secret agent of the British government employed to make philosophical inquiries as to the trade and navigation of Italy, with a view to improve the business relations between the two countries.

"You are an admirer of nobility, and a devotee of aristocracy," added Andrea Barrofaldi, in pursuit of the subject then in hand; "if the truth were known, a scion of some noble house yourself, Signore?"

"I?—Peste!—I hate an aristocrat, Signor Vice-governatore, as I do the devil!"

This was said just after the freest draught

the stranger had taken, and with an unguarded warmth that he himself immediately regretted.

"This is extraordinary in an Inglese! Ah —I see how it is—you are in the *opposizione*, and find it necessary to say this. It is most extraordinary, good Vito Viti, that these Inglese are divided into two political *castes*, that contradict each other in everything. If one maintains that an object is white, the other side swears it is black; and so *vice versâ*. Both parties profess to love their country better than anything else; but the one that is out of power abuses even power itself until it falls into its own hands."

"This is so much like Giorgio Grondi's course towards me, Signore, that I could almost swear he was one of these very *opposizione!* I never approve of a thing that he does not condemn, or condemn that he does not approve. Do you confess this much, Signor Capitano?"

"Il vice-governatore knows us better than we know ourselves, I fear. There is too much truth in his account of our politics;

but, Signore," rising from his chair, " I now crave your permission to look at your town, and to return to my vessel. The darkness has come, and discipline must be observed."

As Andrea Barrofaldi had pretty well exhausted his stores of knowledge, no opposition was made; and, returning his thanks, the stranger took his departure, leaving the two functionaries to discuss his appearance and character over the remainder of the flask.

CHAPTER III.

" There 's Jonathan, that lucky lad,
Who knows it from the root, sir;—
He sucks in all that 's to be had,
And always trades for boot, sir."
14,763*rd verse of Yankee Doodle.*

Il Capitano Smeet was not sorry to get out of the government-house — palazzo, as some of the simple people of Elba called the unambitious dwelling. He had been well badgered by the persevering erudition of the vice-governor; and, stored as he was with nautical anecdotes, and a tolerable personal acquaintance with sundry sea-ports, for any expected occasion of this sort, he had never anticipated a conversation which would aspire so high as the institutions, religion, and laws of his adopted country. Had the worthy

Andrea heard the numberless maledictions that the stranger muttered between his teeth as he left the house, it would have shocked all his sensibilities, if it did not revive his suspicions.

It was now night; but a starry, calm, voluptuous evening, such as is familiar to those who are acquainted with the Mediterranean and its shores. There was scarcely a breath of wind, though the cool air, which appeared to be a gentle respiration of the sea, induced a few idlers still to linger on the heights, where was a considerable extent of land that might serve for a promenade. Along this walk the mariner proceeded, undetermined, for the moment, what to do next. He had scarcely got into the open space, however, before a female, with her form closely enveloped in a mantle, brushed near him, anxiously gazing into his face. Her motions were too quick and sudden for him to obtain a look in return; but, perceiving that she held her way along the heights, beyond the spot most frequented by the idlers, he followed until she stopped.

"Ghita!" said the young man, in a tone of delight, when he had got near enough to the female to recognise a face and form she no longer attempted to conceal; "this is being fortunate, indeed, and saves a vast deal of trouble. A thousand thousand thanks, dearest Ghita, for this one act of kindness. I might have brought trouble on you, as well as on myself, in striving to find your residence."

"It is for that reason, Raoul, that I have ventured so much more than is becoming in my sex, to meet you. A thousand eyes, in this gossiping little town, are on your lugger at this moment, and be certain they will also be on its captain, as soon as it is known that he has landed. I fear you do not know for what you and your people are suspected, at this very instant!"

"For nothing discreditable, I hope, dear Ghita, if it be only not to dishonour your friends."

"Many think, and say, you are Frenchmen, and that the English flag is only a disguise."

"If that be all, we must bear the infamy," answered Raoul Yvard, laughing. "Why this is just what we are, to a man, a single American excepted; who is an excellent fellow to make out British commissions, and help us to a little English when harder pushed than common; and why should we be offended, if the good inhabitants of Porto Ferrajo take us for what we are!"

"Not offended, Raoul, but endangered. If the vice-governor gets this notion, he will order the batteries to fire upon you, and will destroy you as an enemy."

"Not he, Ghita. He is too fond of le Capitaine Smeet, to do so cruel a thing; and then he must shift all his guns before they will hurt 'Le Feu-Follet' where she lies. I never leave my little Jack o' Lantern within reach of an enemy's hand. Look here, Ghita, you can see her through this opening in the houses, —that dark spot on the bay there,—and you will perceive that no gun from any battery in Porto Ferrajo can as much as frighten, much less harm her."

"I know her position, Raoul, and understood why you anchored in that spot. I knew, or thought I knew you, from the first moment you came in plain sight; and so long as you remained outside, I was not sorry to look on so old a friend—nay I will go farther, and say I rejoiced, for it seemed to me you passed so near the island just to let some whom you knew to be on it understand you had not forgotten them; but when you came into the bay I thought you mad!"

"Mad I should have been, dearest Ghita, had I lived longer without seeing you. What are these *misérables* of Elbans, that I should fear them! They have no cruiser—only a few feluccas, all of which are not worth the trouble of burning. Let them but point a finger at us, and we will tow their Austrian polacre out into the bay, and burn her before their eyes. Le Feu-Follet deserves her name; she is here, there, and everywhere before her enemies suspect her."

"But her enemies suspect her now, and you cannot be too cautious. My heart was in my

throat a dozen times, while the batteries were firing at you this evening."

"And what harm did they?—they cost the Grand Duke two cartridges, and two shot, without even changing the lugger's course! You have seen too much of these things, Ghita, to be alarmed by smoke and noise."

"I have seen enough of these things, Raoul, to know that a heavy shot, fired from these heights, would have gone through your little Feu-Follet, and, coming out under water, would have sunk you to the bottom of the Mediterranean!"

"We should have had our boats, then," answered Raoul Yvard, with an indifference that was not affected, for reckless daring was his vice rather than his virtue; "besides, a shot must first hit before it can harm, as the fish must be taken before it can be cooked. But enough of this, Ghita; I get quite enough of shot, and ships, and sinkings in everyday life, and, now I have at last found this blessed moment, we will not throw away the opportunity by talking of such matters."

"Nay, Raoul, I can think of nothing else, and therefore can talk of nothing else. Suppose the vice-governor should suddenly take it into his head to send a party of soldiers to Le Feu-Follet with orders to seize her,—what would then be your situation?"

"Let him; and I would send a boat's crew to his palazzo, here," (the conversation was in French, which Ghita spoke fluently, though with an Italian accent,) "and take him on a cruise after the English and his beloved Austrians! Bah! the idea will not cross his constitutional brain, and there is little use in talking about it. In the morning, I will send my prime minister, mon Barras, mon Carnot, mon Cambacères, mon Ithuel Bolt, to converse with him on politics and religion."

"Religion," repeated Ghita, in a saddened tone; "the less you say on that holy subject, Raoul, the better I shall like it, and the better it will be for yourself, in the end. The state of your country makes your want of religion matter of regret, rather than of accusation; but it is none the less a dreadful evil."

"Well, then," resumed the sailor, who felt that he had touched a dangerous ground, "we will talk of other things. Even supposing we are taken, what great evil have we to apprehend? We are honest corsairs, duly commissioned, and acting under the protection of the French Republic, one and undivided, and can but be made prisoners of war. That is a fortune which has once befallen me, and no greater calamity followed than my having to call myself 'le Capitaine Smeet', and finding out the means of mystifying le vice-governatore."

Ghita laughed, in spite of the fears she entertained; for it was one of the most powerful of the agencies the sailor employed in making others converts to his opinions, to cause them to sympathise with his light-hearted gaiety, whether it suited their natural temperaments or not. She knew that Raoul had already been a prisoner in England two years, where, as he himself often said, he stayed just long enough to acquire a very respectable acquaintance with the language, if not with the institutions, manners, and religion, when he made

his escape, aided by the American called Ithuel Bolt, an impressed seaman of the Republic, who, fully entering into all the plans imagined by his more enterprising friend and fellow-sufferer, had cheerfully enlisted in the execution of his future schemes of revenge. States, like powerful individuals in private life, usually feel themselves too strong to allow any considerations of the direct consequences of departures from the right to influence their policy; and a nation is apt to fancy its power of such a character as to despise all worldly amends, while its moral responsibility is divided among too many to make it a matter of much moral concernment to its particular citizens. Nevertheless, the truth will show that none are so low but they may become dangerous to the highest; and even powerful communities seldom fail to meet with their punishment for every departure from justice. It would seem, indeed, that a principle pervades nature which renders it impossible for man to escape the consequences of his own evil deeds, even in this life; as if God had

decreed the universal predominance of truth, and the never-failing downfal of falsehood, from the beginning; the success of wrong being ever temporary, while the triumph of the right is eternal. To apply these consoling considerations to the matter more immediately before us: the practice of impressment, in its day, raised a feeling among the seamen of other nations, as well as, in fact, among those of Great Britain herself, which probably has had as much effect in destroying the prestige of her nautical invincibility, supported, as was that prestige, by a vast existing force, as any other one cause whatever. It was necessary to witness the feeling of hatred and resentment which was raised by the practice of this despotic power, more especially among those who felt that their foreign birth ought at least to have assured them impunity from the abuse, in order fully to appreciate what might so readily become its consequences. Ithuel Bolt, the seaman just mentioned, was a proof, in a small way, of the harm which even an insignificant individual can effect when his mind is fully

and wholly bent on revenge. Ghita knew him well; and although she little liked either his character or his appearance, she had often been obliged to smile at the narrative of the deceptions he practised on the English, and of the thousand low inventions he had devised to do them injury. She was not slow, now, to imagine that his agency had not been trifling in carrying on the present fraud.

"You do not openly call your lugger Le Feu-Follet, Raoul," she answered, after a minute's pause; "that would be a dangerous name to utter, even in Porto Ferrajo. It is not a week since I heard a mariner dwelling on her misdeeds, and the reasons which all good Italians have to detest her. It is fortunate that the man is away, or he could not fail to know you."

"Of that I am not so certain, Ghita. We alter our paint often, and at need can alter our rig. You may be certain, however, that we hide our Jack o' Lantern, and sail under another name. The lugger, now she is in the English service, is called the 'Ving-and-Ving.'"

"I heard the answer given to the hail from the shore, but it sounded different from this."

"Non —Ving-and-Ving. Ithuel answered for us, and you may be sure he can speak his own tongue. Ving-and-Ving is the word, and he pronounces it as I do."

"Ving-y-Ving!" repeated Ghita, in her pretty Italian tones, dropping naturally into the vice-governor's fault of pronunciation — it is an odd name, and I like it less than Feu-Follet."

"I wish, dearest Ghita, I could persuade you to like the name of Yvard," rejoined the young man, in a half-reproachful, half-tender, manner, "and I should care nothing for any other. You accuse me of disrespect for priests; but no son could ever kneel to a father for his blessing half so readily or half so devoutly as I could kneel with thee before any friar in Italy, to receive that nuptial benediction which I have so often asked at your hand, but which you have so constantly and so cruelly refused."

"I am afraid the name would not then be

Feu-Follet, but Ghita-Folie," said the girl, laughing, though she felt a bitter pang at the heart which cost her an effort to control; "no more of this now, Raoul; we may be observed, and watched; it is necessary that we separate."

A hurried conversation, of more interest to the young couple themselves than it would prove to the reader, though it might not have been wholly without to the latter, but which it would be premature to relate, now followed, when Ghita left Raoul on the hill, insisting that she knew the town too well to have any apprehensions about threading its narrow and steep streets at any hour by herself. This much, in sooth, must be said in favour of Andrea Barrofaldi's administration of justice; he had made it safe for the gentle, the feeble, and the poor, equally, to move about the island by day or by night; it seldom happening that so great an enemy to peace and tranquillity appeared among his simple dependents as was the fact at this precise moment.

In the meantime, there was not quite so much tranquillity in Porto Ferrajo as the pro-

found silence which reigned in the place might have induced a stranger to imagine. Tommaso Tonti was a man of influence within his sphere, as well as the vice-governor; and having parted from Vito Viti, as has been related, he sought the little *clientelle* of padroni and piloti, who were in the habit of listening to his opinions as if they were oracles. The usual place of resort of this set, after dark, was a certain house kept by a widow of the name of Benedetta Galopo, the uses of which were plainly enough indicated by a small bush which hung dangling from a short pole fastened above the door. If Benedetta knew anything of the proverb, that "Good wine needs no bush," she had not sufficient faith in the contents of her own casks to trust their reputation; for this bush of hers was as regularly renewed as its withering leaves required. Indeed, it was a common remark among her customers, that her bush was always as fresh as her face, and that the latter was one of the most comely that was to be met with on the island; a circumstance which aided much indifferent wine in

finding a market. Benedetta bore a reasonably good name; nevertheless, though it was oftener felt perhaps than said, she was a confirmed coquette. She tolerated 'Maso, principally on two accounts; because, if he were old and unattractive in his own person, many of his followers were amongst the smartest seamen of the port, and because he not only drank his full proportion, but paid with punctuality. These inducements rendered the pilot always a welcome guest at La Santa Maria degli Venti, as the house was called, though it had no other sign than the often-renewed bush already mentioned.

At the very moment, then, when Raoul Yvard and Ghita parted on the hill, 'Maso was seated in his usual place at the table in Benedetta's upper room, the windows of which commanded as full a view of the lugger as the hour permitted; that craft being anchored about a cable's length distant, and, as a sailor might have expressed it, just abeam. On this occasion he had selected the upper room, and but three companions, because it was his wish

that as few should enter into his counsels as at all comported with the love of homage to his own experience. The party had been assembled a quarter of an hour, and there had been time to cause the tide to ebb materially in the flask which, it may be well to tell the reader at once, contained very little less than half a gallon of liquor, such as it was.

"I have told it all to the podestà," said 'Maso, with an important manner, as he put down his glass after potation the second, which quite equalled potation the first in quantity; "yes, I have told it all to Vito Viti, and no doubt he has told it to Il Signor Vice-governatore, who now knows as much about the whole matter as either of us four. Cospetto! to think such a thing dare happen in a haven like Porto Ferrajo! Had it come to pass over on the other side of the island, at Porto Longone, one wouldn't think so much of it, for *they* are never much on the look-out; but, to take place here, in the very capital of Elba, I should as soon have expected it in Livorno!"

"But, 'Maso," put in Daniele Bruno, in the manner of one who was a little sceptical, "I have often seen the pavilion of the Inglese, and this is as much like that which all their frigates and corvettes wear, as one of our feluccas is like another. The flag, at least, is right."

"What signifies a flag, Daniele, when a French hand can hoist an English ensign as easily as the king of Inghilterra himself? If that lugger was not built by the Francese you were not built by an Italian father and mother. But, I should not think so much of the hull, for that may have been captured, as the English take many of their enemies on the high seas; but look at the rigging and sails—Santa Maria! I could go to the shop of the very sail-maker in Marseilles who made that foresail! His name is Pierre Benoit, and a very good workman he is, as all will allow who have had occasion to employ him."

This particularity greatly aided the argument; common minds being seldom above yielding to the circumstances which are so

often made to corroborate imaginary facts. Tommaso Tonti, though so near the truth as to his main point—the character of the visiter —was singularly out as to the sail notwithstanding; Le Feu-Follet having been built, equipped, and manned at Nantes, and Pierre Benoit never having seen her or her foresail either; but, it mattered not in the way of discussion and assertion, one sail-maker being as good as another, provided he was French.

"And have you mentioned this to the podestà?" inquired Benedetta, who stood with the empty flask in her hand, listening to the discourse; "I should think that sail would open his eyes."

"I cannot say I have; but then I told him so many other things, more to the point, that he cannot do less than believe this when he hears it. Signor Viti promised to meet me here, after he has had a conversation with the vice-governor; and we may now expect him every minute."

"Il Signor Podestà will be welcome," said Benedetta, wiping off a spare table, and bus-

tling round the room to make things look a little smarter than they ordinarily did; "he may frequent grander wine-houses than this, but he will hardly find better liquor."

"Poverina!—Don't think that the podestà comes here on any such errand; he comes to meet *me*;" answered 'Maso, with an indulgent smile: "he takes his wine too often on the heights to wish to come as low as this after a glass. Friends of mine (*amici miei*), there is wine up at that house which, when the oil is once out of the neck of the flask,* goes down a man's throat as smoothly as if it were all oil itself! I could drink a flask of it without once stopping to take breath. It is that liquor which makes the nobles so light and airy."

"I know the washy stuff," put in Benedetta, with more warmth than she was used to betray to her customers; "well may you call it smooth, a good spring running near each of the wine-presses which have made it. I have

* It is a practice in Tuscany to put a few drops of oil in the neck of each flask of the more delicate wines, to exclude the air.

seen some of it that even oil would not float on!"

This assertion was a fair counterpoise to that of the sail, being about as true. But Benedetta had too much experience in the inconstancy of men, not to be aware that if the three or four customers who were present should seriously take up the notion that the island contained any better liquor than that she habitually placed before them, her value might be sensibly diminished in their eyes. As became a woman who had to struggle singly with the world, too, her native shrewdness taught her that the best moment to refute a calumny was to stop it as soon as it began to circulate, and her answer was as warm in manner as it was positive in terms. This was an excellent opening for an animated discussion, and one would have been very likely to occur had there not fortunately been steps heard without, which induced 'Maso to expect the podestà. Sure enough, the door opened, and Vito Viti appeared, followed, to the astonishment of all the guests,

and to the absolute awe of Benedetta, by the vice-governor himself.

The solution of this unexpected visit is very easily given. After the departure of the Capitano Smees, Vito Viti returned to the subject of 'Maso's suspicions, and by suggesting certain little circumstances in the mariner's manner which he had noted during the interview, he so far succeeded in making an impression on himself, that, in the end, his own distrust revived, and with it that of the deputy-governor. Neither, however, could be said to be more than uneasy, and the podestà happening to mention his appointment with the pilot, Andrea determined to accompany him in order to reconnoitre the strange craft in person. Both the functionaries wore their cloaks, by no means an unusual thing in the cool night air of the coast, even in midsummer, which served them for all the disguise that circumstances required.

"Il Signor Vice-governatore!" almost gasped Benedetta, dusting a chair, and then the table, and disposing of the former near the latter by

a sort of mechanical process, as if only one errand could ever bring a guest within her doors; "your eccellenza is most welcome; and it is an honour I could oftener ask. We are humble people, down here at the water-side; but I hope we are just as good Christians as if we lived upon the hill."

"Doubt it not, worthy Bettina—"

"My name is Benedetta, at your eccellenza's command—Benedettina, if it please the vice-governor; but not Bettina. We think much of our names down here at the water-side, eccellenza."

"Let it be so, then, good Benedetta, and I make no doubt you are excellent Christians.—A flask of your wine, if it be convenient."

The woman dropped a curtsy that was full of gratitude; and the glance of triumph which she cast at her other guests may be said to have terminated the discussion that was about to commence as the dignitaries appeared. It disposed of the question of the wine at once, and for ever silenced cavilling. If the

vice-governor could drink her liquor, what mariner would henceforth dare calumniate it?

"Eccellenza, with a thousand welcomes," Benedetta continued, as she placed the flask on the table, after having carefully removed the cotton and the oil with her own plump hand; this being one of half-a-dozen flasks of really sound, well-flavoured, Tuscan liquor which she kept for especial occasions; as she well might, the cost being only a paul, or ten cents, for nearly half a gallon; "Eccellenza, a million times welcome. This is an honour that don't befal the Santa Maria degli Venti more than once in a century; and you, too, Signor Podestà, once before, only, have you ever had leisure to darken my poor door."

"We bachelors"—the podestà, as well as the vice-governor, belonged to the fraternity —"we bachelors are afraid to trust ourselves too often in the company of sprightly widows, like yourself, whose beauty has rather improved than lessened by a few years."

This brought a coquettish answer, during

which time Andrea Barrofaldi, having first satisfied himself that the wine might be swallowed with impunity, was occupied in surveying the party of silent and humble mariners who were seated at the other table. His object was to ascertain how far he might have committed himself, by appearing in such a place, when his visit could not well be attributed to more than one motive. 'Maso he knew, as the oldest pilot of the place, and he had also some knowledge of Daniele Bruno, but the three other seamen were strangers to him.

"Inquire if we are among friends here, and worthy subjects of the Grand Duke, all;" observed Andrea to Vito Viti in a low voice.

"Thou hearest, 'Maso," observed the podestà; "canst thou answer for all of thy companions?"

"Every one of them, Signore; this is Daniele Bruno, whose father was killed in a battle with the Algerines, and whose mother was the daughter of a mariner as well known in Elba as—"

"Never mind the particulars, Tommaso Tonti," interrupted the vice-governor; "it is sufficient that thou knowest all thy companions to be honest men and faithful servants of the *sovrano*. You all know most probably the errand which has brought the Signor Viti and myself to this house to-night?"

The men looked at each other, as the ill-instructed are apt to do when it becomes necessary to answer a question that concerns many; assisting the workings of their minds, as it might be, with the aid of the senses; and then Daniele Bruno took on himself the office of spokesman!

"Signore, vostra eccellenza, we think we do," answered the man. "Our fellow 'Maso here, has given us to understand that he suspects the Inglese which is anchored in the bay to be no Inglese at all, but either a pirate or a Frenchman. The blessed Maria preserve us! but in these troubled times it does not make much difference which."

"I will not say as much as that, friend,

for one would be an outcast aomng all people, while the other would have the rights which shield the servants of civilized nations;" returned the scrupulous and just-minded functionary. "The time was when His Imperial Majesty, the emperor, and his illustrious brother, our Sovereign, the Grand Duke, did not allow that the republican government of France was a lawful government; but the fortune of war removed his scruples, and a treaty of peace has allowed the contrary. Since the late alliance it is our duty to consider all Frenchmen as enemies, though it by no means follows that we are to consider them as pirates."

"But their corsairs seize all our craft, Signore, and treat their people as if they were no better than dogs: then, they tell me that they are not Christians—no, not even Luterani, or heretics!"

"That religion does not flourish among them is true," answered Andrea, who loved so well to discourse on such subjects that he would have stopped to reason on religion or

manners with the beggar to whom he gave a pittance, did he only meet with encouragement; "but it is not so bad in France, on this important head, as it has been; and we may hope that there will be further improvement in due time."

"But, Signor Vice-governatore," put in 'Maso, "these people have treated the Holy Father and his States in a way that one would not treat an Infidel or a Turk!"

"Ay, that is it, Signori," observed Benedetta; "a poor woman cannot go to mass without having her mind disturbed by the thoughts of the wrongs done the Head of the Church. Had these things come from Luterani it might have been borne, but they say the Francese were once all good Catholics!"

"So were the Luterani, bella Benedetta, to their chief schismatic and leader, the German monk himself."

This piece of information caused great surprise, even the podestà himself turning an inquiring glance at his superior, as much as to acknowledge his own wonder that a Pro-

testant should ever have been anything but a Protestant—or rather, a Lutheran, anything but a Lutheran—the word Protestant being too significant to be in favour among those who deny there were any just grounds for a protest at all. That Luther had ever been a Romanist was perfectly wonderful, even in the eyes of Vito Viti.

"Signore, you would hardly mislead these honest people, in a matter as grave as this!" exclaimed the podestà.

"I do but tell you truth; and one of these days you shall hear the whole story, neighbour Viti. 'Tis worth an hour of leisure to any man, and is very consoling and useful to a Christian. But who have you below, Benedetta? I hear steps on the stairs, and wish not to be seen."

The widow stepped promptly forward to meet her new guests, and to show them into a commoner room below stairs, when her movement was anticipated by the door's opening, and a man standing on the threshold. It was now too late to prevent the intrusion, and a

little surprise at the appearance of the new comer held all mute and observant for a minute.

The person who had followed his ears and thus reached the sanctum sanctorum of Benedetta, was no other than Ithuel Bolt, the American seaman, already named in the earlier part of this chapter. He was backed by a Genoese, who had come in the double capacity of interpreter and boon companion. That the reader may the better understand the character he has to deal with, however, it may be necessary to digress, by giving a short account of the history, appearance, and peculiarities of the former individual."

Ithuel Bolt was a native of what, in the United States, is called the Granite State. Notwithstanding he was not absolutely made of the stone in question, there was an absence of the ordinary symptoms of natural feeling about him, which had induced many of his French acquaintances in particular to affirm that there was a good deal more of marble in his moral temperament, at least, than usually fell to the

lot of human beings. He had the outline of a good frame, but it was miserably deficient in the filling up. The bone predominated; the sinews came next in consideration; nor was the man without a proper share of muscle; but this last was so disposed of as to present nothing but angles, whichever way he was viewed. Even his thumbs and fingers were nearer square than round, and his very neck, which was bare, though a black silk kerchief was tied loosely round the throat, had a sort of pentagon look about it, that defied all symmetry or grace. His stature was just six feet and an inch, when he straightened himself; as he did from time to time, seemingly with a desire to relieve a very inveterate stoop in his shoulders, though it was an inch or two less in the position he most affected. His hair was dark, and his skin had got several coats of confirmed brown on it, by exposure, though originally rather fair, while the features were good, the forehead being broad and full, and the mouth positively handsome. This singular countenance was illuminated by two keen, restless, whitish eyes, which

resembled, not spots on the sun, but rather suns on a spot.

Ithuel had gone through all the ordinary vicissitudes of an American life, beneath those pursuits which are commonly thought to be confined to the class of gentlemen. He had been farmer's boy, printer's devil, schoolmaster, stage-driver and tin-pedlar, before he ever saw the sea. In the way of what he called "chores," too, he had practised all the known devices of rustic domestic economy; having assisted even in the washing and house-cleaning, besides having passed the evenings of an entire winter in making brooms.

Ithuel had reached his thirtieth year before he dreamed of going to sea. An accident, then, put preferment in this form before his eyes, and he engaged as the mate of a small coaster on his very first voyage. Fortunately, the master never found out his deficiencies, for Ithuel had a self-possessed, confident way with him which prevented discovery, until they were outside of the port from which they sailed, when the former was knocked overboard by the

main boom and drowned. Most men, so circumstanced, would have returned; but Bolt never laid his hand to the plough and looked back. Besides, one course was quite as easy to him as another. Whatever he undertook he usually completed in some fashion or other; though it were often much better had it never been attempted. Fortunately it was summer, the wind was fair, and the crew wanted little ordering; and as it was quite a matter of course to steer in the right direction until the schooner was carried safely into her proper port, she arrived safely; her people swearing that the new mate was the easiest and *cleverest* officer they had ever sailed with. And well they might, for Ithuel took care not to issue an order until he had heard it suggested in terms by one of the hands, and then he never failed to repeat it, word for word, as if it were a suggestion of his own. As for the reputation of "cleverest" officer, which he so easily obtained, it will be understood, of course, that the term was used in the provincial signification that is so common in the part of the world from which

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Ithuel came. He was "clever" in this sense, precisely in proportion as he was ignorant. His success on this occasion gained him friends, and he was immediately sent out again as the regular master of the craft in which he had so unexpectedly received his promotion. He now threw all the duty on the mate; but so ready was he in acquiring, that, by the end of six months, he was a much better sailor than most Europeans would have made in three years. As the pitcher that goes too often to the well is finally broken, so did Ithuel meet with shipwreck at last, in consequence of gross ignorance on the subject of navigation. This induced him to try a long voyage, in a more subordinate situation, until, in the course of time, he was impressed by the commander of an English frigate, who had lost so many of his men by the yellow fever, that he seized upon all he could lay his hands on to supply their places, even Ithuel being acceptable in such a strait.

CHAPTER IV.

The ship is here put in,
A Veronese ; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,
Is come on shore.

Othello.

THE glance which Ithuel cast around him was brief, but comprehensive. He saw that two of the party in the room were much superior to the other four, and that the last were common Mediterranean mariners. The position which Benedetta occupied in the household could not be mistaken, for she proclaimed herself its mistress by her very air; whether it were in the upper or in the lower room.

"Vino," said Ithuel, with a flourish of the hand to help along his Italian; this and one

or two more being the only words of the language he ventured to use directly, or without calling in the assistance of his interpreter; "vino—vino, vino, Signora."

"Sì, sì, sì, Signore," answered Benedetta, laughing, and this with her meaning eyes so keenly riveted on the person of her new guest, as to make it very questionable whether she were amused by anything but his appearance; "your eccellenza shall be served; but whether at a paul or a half-paul the flask depends on your own pleasure. We keep wine at both prices, and," glancing towards the table of Andrea Barrofaldi, "usually serve the first to signori of rank and distinction."

"What does the woman say?" growled Ithuel to his intrepreter, a Genoese, who from having served several years in the British navy spoke English with a very tolerable facility; "you know what we want, and just tell her to hand it over, and I will fork out her St. Paul without more words. What a desperate liking your folks have for saints, Philip-o!" for so Ithuel pronounced Filippo,

the name of his companion—"what a desperate liking your folks have for saints, Philip-o, that they must even call their money after them!"

"It not so in America, Signor Bolto?" asked the Genoese, after he had explained his wishes to Benedetta, in Italian; "it no ze fashion in your country to honour ze saints?".

"Honour the saints!" repeated Ithuel, looking curiously around him, as he took a seat at a third table, shoving aside the glasses at the same time, and otherwise disposing of everything within reach of his hand so as to suit his own notions of order; and then leaning back on his chair until the two ends of the uprights dug into the plaster behind him, while the legs on which the fabric was poised cracked with his weight; "honour the saints! we should be much more like to dishonour them! What does any one want to honour a saint for? A saint is but a human —a man like you and me, after all the fuss you make about 'em.—Saints abound in my country, if you'd believe people's account of themselves."

"Not quite so, Signor Bolto. You and me no great saint. Italian honour saint because he holy and good."

By this time Ithuel had got his two feet on the round of his seat, his knees spread so as to occupy as much space as an unusual length of leg would permit, and his arms extended on the tops of two chairs, one on each side of him, in a way to resemble what is termed a spread-eagle.

Andrea Barrofaldi regarded all this with wonder. It is true, he expected to meet with no great refinement in a wine-house like that of Benedetta; but he was unaccustomed to see such nonchalance of manner in a man of the stranger's class, or, indeed, of any class; the Italian mariners present occupying their chairs in simple and respectful attitudes, as if each man had the wish to be as little obtrusive as possible. Still he let no sign of his surprise escape him, noting all which passed in a grave but attentive silence. Perhaps he saw traces of national peculiarities, if not of national history, in the circumstances.

"Honour saint because he holy and good!" said Ithuel, with a very ill-concealed disdain—"why, that is the very reason why we *don't* honour 'em. When you honour a holy man, mankind may consait you to do it on that very account, and so fall into the notion you worship him, which would be idolatry, the awfullest of all sins, and the one to which every ra'al Christian gives the widest bairth. I would raythe worship this flask of wine, any day, than worship the best saint on your parson's books."

As Filippo was no casuist, but merely a believer, and Ithuel applied the end of the flask to his mouth at that moment, from an old habit of drinking out of jugs and bottles, the Genoese made no answer; keeping his eyes on the flask, which, by the length of time it remained at the other's mouth, appeared to be in great danger of being exhausted,—a matter of some moment to one of his own relish for the liquor.

"Do you call *this* wine?" exclaimed Ithuel, when he stopped, literally to take breath;

"there isn't as much true granite in a gallon on 't, as in a pint of our cider. I could swallow a butt, and then walk a plank as narrow as your religion, Philip-o!"

This was said, nevertheless, with a look of happiness, which proved how much the inward man was consoled by what it had received, and a richness of expression about the handsome mouth, which denoted a sort of consciousness that it had been the channel of a most agreeable communication to the stomach. Sooth to say, Benedetta had brought up a flask at a paul, or at about four cents a bottle,—a flask of the very quality which she had put before the vice-governor; and this was a liquor which flowed so smoothly over the palate, and of a quality so really delicate, that Ithuel was by no means aware of the potency of the guest which he had admitted to his interior.

All this time the vice-governor was making up his mind concerning the nation and character of the stranger. That he should mistake Bolt for an Englishman was natural enough, and the fact had an influence in again

unsettling his opinion as to the real flag under which the lugger sailed. Like most Italians of that day, he regarded all the families of the northern hordes as a species of barbarians,—an opinion that the air and deportment of Ithuel had no direct agency in changing; for while this singular being was not brawlingly rude and vulgar, like the coarser set of his own countrymen with whom he had occasionally been brought in contact, he was so manifestly uncivilised in many material points as to put his claim to gentility much beyond a cavil, and that in a negative way.

"You are a Genoese?" said Andrea to Filippo, speaking with the authority of one who had a right to question.

"Signore, I am, at your eccellenza's orders, though in foreign service at this present moment."

"In what service, friend? I am in authority here in Elba, and ask no more than is my duty."

"Eccellenza, I can well believe this," answered Filippo, rising and making a respectful

salutation, and one, too, that was without any of the awkwardness of the same act in a more northern man, "as it is to be seen in your appearance. I am now in the service of the King of England."

Filippo said this steadily, though his eyes dropped to the floor under the searching scrutiny they endured. The answer of the vice-governor was delivered coolly, though it was much to the point.

"You are happy," he said, "in getting so honourable a master; more especially as your own country has again fallen into the hands of the French. Every Italian heart must yearn for a government that has its existence and its motives on this side of the Alps."

"Signore, we are a republic to-day, and ever have been, you know."

"Ay, such as it is. But your companion speaks no Italian, — he is an Inglese?"

"No, Signore, an Americano: a sort of an Inglese, and yet no Inglese after all. He loves England very little, if I can judge by his discourse."

"Un' Americano!" repeated Andrea Barrofaldi; "Americano!" exclaimed Vito Viti; "Americano!" said each of the mariners in succession, all eyes turning with lively curiosity towards the subject of the discourse, who bore it all with appropriate steadiness and dignity.

The reader is not to be surprised that an American was then regarded with curiosity in a country like Italy; for, two years later, when an American ship of war anchored suddenly before the town of Constantinople, and announced her nation, the authorities of the Sublime Porte were ignorant that such a country existed. It is true, Leghorn was beginning to be much frequented by American ships in the year 1799; but even with these evidences before their eyes, the people of the very ports into which these traders entered were accustomed to consider their crews a species of Englishmen, who managed to sail the vessels for the negroes at home.* In a word, two

* As recently as 1828, the author of this book was at Leghorn. The Delaware, 80, had just left there; and speaking of her appearance to a native of the place, who

centuries and a half of national existence, and more than half a century of national independence, have not yet sufficed to teach all the inhabitants of the Old World that the great modern Republic is peopled by men of an European origin, and possessing white skins. Even of those who are aware of the fact, the larger proportion, perhaps, have obtained their information through works of a light character, similar to this of our own, rather than by the more legitimate course of regular study and a knowledge of history.

"*Sì*," repeated Ithuel, with emphasis, as soon as he heard his nationality thus alluded to, and found all eyes on himself, — "*Sì*, oon Americano,—I 'm not ashamed of my country; and if you 're any way partic'lar in such matters, I come from New Hampshire, or what we call the Granite State. Tell 'em this, Philip-o, and let me know their idees in answer."

supposed the writer to be an Englishman, the latter observed, "Of course, her people were all blacks." — "I thought so, too, Signore, until I went on board the ship," was the answer, "but they are as white as you and I are."

Filippo translated this speech as well as he could, as he did the reply; and it may as well be stated here once for all that, in the dialogue which succeeded, the instrumentality of this interpreter was necessary, that the parties might understand each other. The reader will, therefore, give Filippo credit for this arrangement, although we shall furnish the different speeches very much as if the parties fully comprehended what was said.

"*Uno stato di granito!*" repeated the vice-governor, looking at the podestà with some doubt in the expression of his countenance, — "it must be a painful existence which these poor people endure, to toil for their food in such a region. Ask him, good Filippo, if they have any wine in his part of the world?"

"Wine!" echoed Ithuel,— "tell the Signore that we shouldn't call this stuff wine at all. Nothing goes down our throats that doesn't rasp like a file, and burn like a chip out of Vesuvius. I wish now we had a drink of New-England rum here in order to show him the difference. I despise the man who thinks

all his own things the best just because they 're his 'n; but taste *is* taste a'ter all, and there 's no denying it."

"Perhaps the Signor Americano can give us an insight into the religion of his country, — or are the Americani pagans? I do not remember, Vito, to have read anything of the religion of that quarter of the world."

"Religion, too! — well, a question like this, now, would make a stir among our folks in New Hampshire! Look here, Signore, — we don't call your ceremonies, and images, and robes, and ringing of bells, and bowing and scraping, a religion at all, — any more than we should call this smooth liquor wine."

Ithuel was more under the influence of this "smooth liquor" than he was aware of, or he would not have been so loud in the expression of his dissent, as experience had taught him the necessity of reserve on such subjects in most Catholic communities. But of all this the Signor Barrofaldi was ignorant, and he made his answer with the severity of a good Catholic, though it was with the temper of a gentleman.

"What the Americano calls our ceremonies and images, and ringing of bells, are probably not understood by him," he said; "since a country as little civilized as his own, cannot very well comprehend the mysteries of a profound and ancient religion."

"Civilized! I calculate that it would *stump* this part of the world to produce such a civilization as our very youngest children are brought up on. But it's of no use *talking* and so we will *drink*."

Andrea perceiving, indeed, that there was not much use in *talking*, more especially as Filippo had been a good deal mystified by the word "*stump*," was now disposed to abandon the idea of a dissertation on "religion, manners and laws," to come at once to the matter that brought him into the present company.

"This Americano is also a servant of the English king, it would seem," he carelessly remarked: "I remember to have heard that there was a war between his country and that of the Inglesi, in which the French assisted the

Americani to obtain a sort of a national independence. What that independence is, I do not know; but it is probable that the people of the New World are still obliged to find mariners to serve in the navy of their former masters."

Ithuel's muscles twitched, and an expression of intense bitterness darkened his countenance. Then he smiled in a sort of derision, and gave vent to his feelings in words.

"Perhaps you're right, Signore; perhaps this is the ra'al truth of the matter; for the British do take our people, just the same as if they had the best right in the world to 'em. A'ter all, we *may* be serving our masters: and all we say and think at home, about independence, is just a flash in the pan! Notwithstanding, some on us contrive, by hook or by crook, to take our revenge when occasion offers; and if I don't sarve Master John Bull an ill turn, whenever luck throws a chance in my way, may I never see a bit of the old State again—granite or rotten wood."

This speech was not very closely translated;

but enough was said to awaken curiosity in the vice-governor, who thought it odd that one who served among the English should entertain such feelings towards them. As for Ithuel, himself, he had not observed his usual caution; but, unknown to himself, the oily wine had more "granite" in it than he imagined, and then he seldom spoke of the abuse of impressment without losing more or less of his ordinary self-command.

"Ask the Americano when he first entered into the service of the King of Inghilterra?" said Andrea, "and why he stays in it, if it is unpleasant to him, when so many opportunities of quitting it offer?"

"I never entered," returned Ithuel, taking the word in its technical meaning; "they pressed me, as if I had been a dog they wanted to turn a spit, and kept me seven long years, fighting their accursed battles, and otherwise sarving their eends. I was over here, last year at the mouth of the Nile, in that pretty bit of work—and off Cape St. Vincent, too—and in a dozen more of their battles, and sorely

against my will, on every account. This was hard to be borne, but the hardest of it has not yet been said; nor do I know that I shall tell on 't at all."

"Anything the Americano may think proper to relate, will be listened to with pleasure."

Ithuel was a good deal undecided whether to go on, or not; but taking a fresh pull at the flask, it warmed his feelings to the sticking-point.

"Why, it was adding insult to injury. It's bad enough to injure a man, but when it comes to insulting him into the bargain, there must be but little grit in his natur', if it don't strike fire."

"And yet few are wronged who are not calumniated," observed the philosophical vice-governor. "This is only too much the case with our Italy, worthy neighbour Vito Viti."

"I calculate the English treat all mankind alike, whether it 's in Italy or Ameriky," for so Ithuel would pronounce this word, notwith-

standing he had now been cruising in and near the Mediterranean several years; "but what I found hardest to be borne, was their running their rigs on me about my language and ways, which they were all the time laughing at as Yankee conversation and usages, while they pretended that the body out of which all on it come, was an English body, and so they set it up to be shot at by any of their inimies which might happen to be jogging along our road. Then, squire, it is generally consaited among us in Ameriky, that we speak much the best English a-going; and sure am I, that none on us call a 'hog,' an ''og,' an 'anchor,' a 'hanchor,' or a 'horse,' an ''orse.' What is thought of that matter in this part of the world Signor Squire?"

"We are not critics in your language, but it is reasonable to suppose that the English speak their own tongue better than any other people. That much must be conceded to them, at least, Signor Bolto."

"I shall acknowledge no such advantage as belonging to them. I have not been to

school for nothing, not I. The English call c-l-e-r-k, clark; and c-u-c-u-m-b-e-r, cowcumber; an a-n-g-e-l, aingel; and no reasoning can convince me that's right. I've got a string of words of this sort which they pronounce out of all reason, that's as long as a pair of leading-lines, or a ship's tiller-rope. You must know, Signor Squire, I kept school, in the early part of my life."

"*Non è possibile!*" exclaimed the vice-governor, astonishment actually getting the better of his habitual good breeding; "you must mean, Signor Americano, that you gave lessons in the art of rigging and sailing luggers."

"You never was more mistaken, Signore. I taught, on the general system, all sorts of things in the edication way; and had one of my scholars made such a blunder as to say, 'clark,' or 'aingel,' or 'harth,' or 'cowcumber,' he wouldn't have heard the last of it for that week, at least. But I despise an Englishman, from the very bottom of my soul; for heart isn't deep enough for my feelings."

Absurd as Ithuel's critical dissertations must appear to all who have any familiarity with real English, they were not greatly below many criticisms on the same subject which often illustrate the ephemeral literature of the country; and in his last speech he had made a provincial use of the word "despise," that is getting to be so common as almost to supplant the true signification. By "despising" Ithuel meant that he "hated;" the passion, perhaps, of all others the most removed from the feeling described by the word he had used; inasmuch as it is not easy to elevate those for whom we have a contempt to the level necessary to be hated.

"Notwithstanding, the Inglese are not a despicable people," answered Andrea, who was obliged to take the stranger literally since he knew nothing of his provincial use of terms; "for a nation of the north, they have done marvellous things of late years, especially on the ocean."

This was more than Ithuel could bear. All his personal wrongs, and sooth to say they

had been of a most grievous nature, arose before his mind, incited and inflamed by national dislike; and he broke out in such an incoherent tirade of abuse as completely set all Filippo's knowledge of English at fault, rendering a translation impossible. By this time, Ithuel had swallowed so much of the wine—a liquor which had far more body than he supposed—that he was ripe for mischief, and it was only his extreme violence which prevented him from betraying more than, just at the moment, would have been prudent. The vice-governor listened with attention in the hope of catching something useful; but it all came to his ears a confused mass of incoherent vituperation, from which he could extract nothing. The scene, consequently, soon became unpleasant, and Andrea Barrofaldi took measures to put an end to it. Watching a favourable occasion to speak, he put in a word, as the excited Bolt paused an instant to take breath.

"Signor," observed the vice-governor, "all this may be very true; but as coming

from one who serves the Inglese to one who is the servant of their ally, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, it is quite as extraordinary as it is uncalled for; and we will talk of other things. This lugger, on board which you sail, is, out of all question, English, notwithstanding what you tell us of the nation."

"Ay, *she* is English," answered Ithuel, with a grim smile, "and a pretty boat she is. But then it is no fault of hers, and what can't be cured must be endured. A Guernsey craft, and a desperate goer when she wakes up and puts on her travelling boots!"

"These mariners have a language of their own," remarked Andrea to Vito Viti, smiling as in consideration of Ithuel's nautical habits; "to you and me the idea of a vessel's using boots, neighbour, seems ridiculous; but the seamen, in their imaginations, bestow all sorts of objects on them. It is curious to hear them converse, good Vito; and now I am dwelling here on our island, I have often thought of collecting a number of their images in order to aid in illustrating the

sort of literature which belongs to their calling. This idea of a lugger's putting on her boots, is quite heroic!"

Now Vito Viti, though an Italian with so musical a name, was no poet, but a man so very literal withal as to render him exceedingly matter-of-fact in most of his notions. Accordingly, he saw no particular beauty in the idea of a vessel's wearing boots; and, though much accustomed to defer to the vice-governor's superior knowledge and more extensive reading, he had the courage on this occasion to put in an objection to the probability of the circumstance mentioned.

"Signor Vice-governatore," replied he, "all is not gold that glitters. Fine words sometimes cover poor thoughts, and, I take it, this is an instance of what I mean. Long as I have lived in Porto Ferrajo, and that is now quite fifty years, seeing that I was born here, and have been off the island but four times in my life — and long, therefore, as I have lived here, I never saw a vessel in the harbour that wore boots, or even shoes."

"This is metaphorical, good Vito, and must be looked at in a poetical point of view. Homer speaks of goddesses holding shields before their favourite warriors; while Ariosto makes rats and asses hold discourse together, as if they were members of an academy. All this is merely the effect of imagination, Signore; and he who has the most is the aptest at inventing circumstances which, though not strictly true, are vastly agreeable."

"As for Homer and Ariosto, Signor Vicegovernatore, I doubt if either ever saw a vessel with a boot on, or if either ever knew so much about craft in general as we who live here in Porto Ferrajo. Harkee! friend Filippo, just ask this Americano if in his country he ever saw vessels wear boots? Put the question plainly, and without any of your accursed poetry."

Filippo did as desired, leaving Ithuel to put his own construction on the object of the inquiry; all that had just passed being sealed to him, in consequence of its having been uttered in good Tuscan.

"Boots!" repeated the native of the Granite State, looking round him drolly; "perhaps not exactly the foot-part and the soles, for they ought in reason to be under water; but every vessel that isn't coppered shows her boot-*top*,— of *them* I'll swear I've seen ten thousand, more or less."

This answer mystified the vice-governor, and completely puzzled Vito Viti. The grave mariners at the other table, too, thought it odd; for in no other tongue is the language of the sea so poetical or figurative as in the English; and the term of *boot-top*, as applied to a vessel, was Greek to them as well as to the other listeners. They conversed among themselves on the subject, while their two superiors were holding a secret conference on the other side of the room, giving the American time to rally his recollection, and remember the precise circumstances in which not only he himself, but all his shipmates, were placed. No one could be more wily and ingenious than this man when on his guard, though the inextinguishable hatred with which he re-

garded England and Englishmen had nearly caused him to betray a secret which it was extremely important at that moment to conceal. At length a general silence prevailed, the different groups of speakers ceasing to converse, and all looking towards the vice-governor, as if in expectation that he was about to suggest something which might give a turn to the discourse. Nor was this a mistake, for, after inquiring of Benedetta if she had a private room, he invited Ithuel and the interpreter to follow him into it, leading the way, attended by the podestà. As soon as these four were thus separated from the others, the door was closed, and the two Tuscans came at once to the point.

"Signor Americano," commenced the vice-governor, "between those who understand each other there is little need of many words. This is a language which is comprehended all over the world, and I put it before you in the plainest manner that we may have no mistake."

"It is tolerable plain, sartain!" exclaimed

Ithuel—"two—four—six—eight—ten—all good-looking gold pieces, which, in this part of the world you call *zecchini*—or sequins, as we name 'em in English. What have I done, Signor Squire, or what am I to do for these twenty dollars? Name your tarms; this working in the dark is ag'in the grain of my natur'."

"You are to tell the *truth:* we suspect the lugger of being French; and by putting the proof in our hands you will make us your friends and serve yourself."

Andrea Barrofaldi knew little of America and Americans; but he had imbibed the common European notion that money was the great deity worshiped in that hemisphere, and that all he had to do was to offer a bribe in order to purchase a man of Ithuel's deportment and appearance. In his own island, ten sequins would buy almost any mariner of the port to do any act short of positive legal criminality; and the idea that a barbarian of the west would refuse such a sum, in preference to selling his shipmates, never crossed his mind. Little,

however, did the Italian understand the American. A greater knave than Ithuel, in his own way, it was not easy to find; but it shocked all his notions of personal dignity, self-respect, and republican virtue, to be thus unequivocally offered a bribe; and had the lugger not been so awkwardly circumstanced, he would have been apt to bring matters to a crisis at once, by throwing the gold in the vice-governor's face; although, knowing where it was to be found, he might have set about devising some means of cheating the owner out of it at the very next instant. Boon or bribe, directly and unequivocally offered in the shape of money, as coming from the superior to the inferior, or from the corrupter to the corrupted, had he never taken; and it would have appeared in his eyes a species of degradation to receive the first, and of treason to his nationality to accept the last, though he would lie, invent, manage and contrive, from morning till night, in order to transfer even copper from the pocket of his neighbour to his own, under the forms of

opinion and usage. In a word, Ithuel, as relates to such things, is what is commonly called law-honest, with certain broad salvoes in favour of smuggling of all sorts in foreign countries (at home he never dreamed of such a thing), custom-house oaths, and legal trickery; and this is just the class of men apt to declaim the loudest against the roguery of the rest of mankind. Had there been a law giving half to the informer, he might not have hesitated to betray the lugger and all she contained, more especially in the way of regular business; but he had long before determined that every Italian was a treacherous rogue, and not at all to be trusted like an American rogue; and then his indomitable dislike of England would have kept him true in a case of much less complicated risk than this. Commanding himself, however, and regarding the sequins with natural longing, he answered with a simplicity of manner which both surprised and imposed on the vice-governor.

"No, no, Signor Squire," said he; "in the first place, I 've no secret to tell; and it

would be a trickish thing to touch your money, and not give you its worth in return; and then the lugger is Guernsey built, and carries a good King George's commission. In my part of the world, we never take gold unless we sell something of equal valie. Gifts and begging we look upon as mean and unbecoming, and the next thing to going on the town as a pauper; though if I can sarve you lawfully, like, I 'm just as willing to work for *your* money as for that of any other man. I 've no preference for kings, in that partic'lar."

All this time Ithuel held out the sequins, with a show of returning them, though in a very reluctant manner, leaving Andrea, who comprehended his actions much better than his words, to understand that he declined selling his secret.

You can keep the money, friend," observed the vice-governor, " for when we give, in Italy, it is not our practice to take the gift back again. In the morning, perhaps, you will remember something which it may be useful for me to know."

"I 've no occasion for gifts, nor is it exactly according to the granite rule to accept 'em," answered Ithuel, a little sharply. "Handsome conduct is handsome conduct; and I call the fellow-creetur' that would oppress and overcome another with a gift little better than an English aristocrat. Hand out the dollars in the way of trade, in as large amounts as you will, and I 'll find the man, and that, too, in the lugger, who will see you out in't to your heart's content. — Harkee! Philip-o; tell the gentleman, in an under-tone, like, about the three kegs of tobacco we got out of the Virginy ship the day we made the north end of Corsica, and perhaps that will satisfy him we are not his inimies. There is no use in bawling it out, so that the woman can hear what you say, or the men who are drinking in the other room."

"Signor Ithuello," answered the Genoese, in English, "it will no do to let these gentlemen know anything of them kegs—one being the deputy-governor and the other a magistrate. The lugger will be seized for a smuggler,

which will be the next thing to being seized for an enemy."

"Yet I've a longing for them 'ere sequins, to tell you the truth, Philip-o! I see no other means of getting at 'em, except it be through them three kegs of tobacco."

"Why you don't take 'em when the Signore put 'em into your very hand? All you do is put 'em in your pocket, and say, 'Eccellenza, what you please to wish?'"

"That isn't granite, man, but more in the natur' of you Italians. The most disgraceful thing on 'airth is a paupe," so Ithuel pronounced "pauper" — "the next is a street-beggar; after him comes your chaps who take sixpences and shillin's in the way of small gifts; and last of all an Englishman. All these I despise; but let this Signore say but the word in the way of trade, and he'll find me as ready and expairt as he can wish. I'd defy the devil in a trade!"

Filippo shook his head, positively declining to do so foolish a thing as to mention a contraband article to those whose duty it would be

to punish a violation of the revenue-laws. In the meanwhile the sequins remained in the hands of Andrea Barrofaldi, who seemed greatly at a loss to understand the character of the strange being whom chance had thus thrown in his way. The money was returned to his purse; but his distrust and doubts were by no means removed.

"Answer me one thing, Signor Bolto," asked the vice-governor, after a minute of thought; "if you hate the English so much, why do you serve in their ships?—why not quit them on the first good occasion? The land is as wide as the sea, and you must be often on it."

"I calculate, Signor Squire, you don't often study charts, or you wouldn't fall into such a consait. There's twice as much water as solid ground on this 'airth, to begin with; as in reason there ought to be, seeing that an acre of good productive land is worth five or six of oceans; and then you have little knowledge of my character and prospects to ask such a question. I sarve the king of England to make him pay well for it. If you want to take an

advantage of a man, first get him in debt; then you can work your will on him in the most profitable and safe manner!"

All this was unintelligible to the vice-governor, who, after a few more questions and answers, took a civil leave of the strangers, intimating to Benedetta that they were not to follow him back into the room he had just quitted.

As for Ithuel, the disappearance of the two gentlemen gave him no concern; but, as he felt that it might be unsafe to drink any more wine, he threw down his reckoning and strolled into the street, followed by his companion. Within an hour from that moment the three kegs of tobacco were in the possession of a shop-keeper of the place, that brief interval sufficing to enable the man to make his bargain, and to deliver the articles, which was his real object on shore. This little smuggling transaction was carried on altogether without the knowledge of Raoul Yvard, who was, to all intents and purposes, the captain of his own lugger, and in whose character there were

many traits of chivalrous honour, mixed up with habits and pursuits which would not seem to promise qualities so elevated. But this want of a propensity to turn a penny in his own way, was not the only distinguishing characteristic between the commander of the little craft and the being he occasionally used as a mask to his true purposes.

CHAPTER V.

> The great contention of the sea and skies
> Parted our fellowship :— But, hark ! a sail.
> *Cassio.*

WHATEVER may have been the result of the vice-governor's further inquiries and speculations that night, they were not known. After consuming an hour in the lower part of the town, in and around the port, he and the podestà sought their homes and their pillows, leaving the lugger riding quietly at her anchor in the spot where she was last presented to the reader's attention. If Raoul Yvard and Ghita had another interview, too, it was so secretly managed as to escape all observation, and can form no part of this narrative.

A Mediterranean morning at midsummer is one of those balmy and soothing periods of the

day that affect the mind as well as the body. Everywhere we have the mellow and advancing light which precedes the appearance of the sun—the shifting hues of the sky—that pearly softness which seems to have been invented to make us love the works of God's hand, and the warm glow of the brilliant sun; but it is not everywhere that these fascinating changes occur on a sea whose blue vies with the darkest depths of the void of space, beneath a climate which is as winning as the scenes it adorns, and amid mountains whose faces reflect every varying shade of light with the truth and the poetry of nature. Such a morning as this last was that which succeeded the night with which our tale opened, bringing with it the reviving movements of the port and town. Italy, as a whole, is remarkable for an appearance of quiet and repose which are little known in the more bustling scenes of the greedier commerce of America, or, indeed, in those of most of the northern nations of Europe. There is in her aspect, modes of living, and even in her habits of business, an air of

decayed gentility which is wanting to the ports, shops, and marts of the more vulgar parts of the world; as if, conscious of having been so long the focus of human refinement, it was unbecoming, in these later days, to throw aside all traces of her history and power. Man, and the climate, too, seem in unison; one meeting the cares of life with a *far-niente* manner which is singularly in accordance with the dreamy and soothing atmosphere he respires.

Just as day dawned, the fall of a billet of wood on the deck of the Feu-Follet, gave the first intimation that any one was stirring in or near the haven. If there had been a watch on board that craft throughout the night, and doubtless such had been the case, it had been kept in so quiet and unobtrusive a manner as to render it questionable to the jealous eyes which had been riveted on her from the shore until long past midnight. Now, however, everything was in motion, and in less than five minutes after that billet of wood had fallen from the hands of the cook, as he was about to light his galley-fire, the tops of the hats and

caps of some fifty or sixty sailors were seen moving to and fro, just above the upper edge of the bulwarks. Three minutes later, and two men appeared near the knight-heads, each with his arms folded, looking at the vessel's hawse, and taking a survey of the state of the harbour and of objects on the surrounding shore.

The two individuals who were standing in the conspicuous position named, were Raoul Yvard himself and Ithuel Bolt. Their conversation was in French, the part borne by the latter being most execrably pronounced, he paying little or no attention to grammar; but it is necessary that we should render what was said by both into the vernacular, with the peculiarities which belonged to the men.

"I see only the Austrian that is worth the trouble of a movement," quietly observed Raoul, whose eye was scanning the inner harbour, his own vessel lying two hundred yards without it, it will be remembered; "and she is light, and would scarcely pay for sending her to Toulon. These feluccas would embarrass us,

without affording much reward, and then their loss would ruin the poor devils of owners, and bring misery into many a family."

"Well, that's a new idee for a privateer!" said Ithuel, sneeringly; "luck's luck in these matters, and every man must count on what war turns up. I wish you'd read the history of *our* revolution, and then you'd ha' seen that liberty and equality are not to be had without some ups and downs in fortins and chances."

"The Austrian *might* do," added Raoul, who paid little attention to his companion's remarks, "if he were a streak or two lower in the water; but after all, E-too-*ell*,"—for so he pronounced the other's name,—"I do not like a capture that is made without any *éclat* or spirit in the attack and defence."

"Well,"—this word Ithuel invariably pronounced "wa-a-l"—"well, to my notion, the most profitable and the most agreeable battles are the shortest, and the pleasantest victories are them in which there's the most prize-money. Howsever, as that brig is only an Austrian, I

care little what you may detairmine to do with her; was she English, I'd head a boat myself to go in and tow her out here, expressly to have the satisfaction of burning her.—English ships make a cheerful fire!"

"And that would be a useless waste of property, and perhaps of blood, and would do no one any good, Etooell."

"But it would do the accursed English *harm*, and that counts for a something in my reckoning. Nelson wasn't so over-scrupulous at the Nile about burning your ships, Mr. Rule—"

"*Tonnèrre!* why do you always bring in that *malheureux* Nile?—Is it not enough that we were beaten—disgraced—destroyed—that a friend must tell us of it so often?"

"You forget, Mr. Rule, that I was an *inimy, then;*" returned Ithuel, with a grin and a grim smile. "If you'll take the trouble to examine my back, you'll find on it the marks of the lashes I got for just telling my captain that it went ag'in the grain for me,

a republican as I was by idee and natur', to fight other republicans. He told me that he would first try the grain of my skin, and see how that would agree with what he called my duty; and I must own, he got the best on't; I fit like a tiger ag'in you rather than be flogged twice the same day. Flogging on a sore back is an awful argument!"

"And now has come the hour of revenge, *pauvre Etooell;* this time you are on the right side, and may fight with heart and mind those you so much hate."

A long and gloomy silence followed, during which Raoul turned his face aft, and stood looking at the movements of the men as they washed the decks, while Ithuel seated himself on a knight-head, and, his chin resting on his hand, he sat ruminating, in bitterness of spirit, like Milton's devil, in some of his dire cogitations, on the atrocious wrong of which he had really been the subject. Bodies of men are proverbially heartless. They commit injustice without reflection, and vindicate their abuses without remorse. And yet it may be

doubtful if either a nation or an individual ever tolerated, or was an accessary in, a wrong, that the act sooner or later did not recoil on the offending party, through that mysterious principle of right, which is implanted in the nature of things, bringing forth its own results as the seed produces its grain, and the tree its fruits; a supervision of holiness which it is usual to term (and rightly enough, when we remember who created principles) the providence of God. Let that people dread the future who, in their collected capacity, systematically encourage injustice of any sort; since their own eventual demoralization will follow as a necessary consequence, even though they escape punishment in a more direct form.

We shall not stop to relate the moody musings of the New-Hampshire man. Unnurtured and, in many respects, unprincipled as he was, he had his clear conceptions of the injustice of which he had been one, among thousands of other victims; and, at that moment, he would have held life itself as a cheap

sacrifice, could he have had his fill of revenge. Often, while a captive on board the English ship in which he had been immured for years, had he meditated the desperate expedient of blowing up the vessel; and had not the means been wanting, mercenary and selfish as he ordinarily seemed, so dire a scheme he was every way equal to execute, in order to put an end to the lives of those who were the agents in wronging him, and his own sufferings together. The subject never recurred to his mind without momentarily changing the current of its thoughts, and tinging all his feelings with an intensity of bitterness which it was painful to bear. At length, sighing heavily, he rose from the knight-head, and turned towards the mouth of the bay, as if to conceal from Raoul the expression of his countenance. This act, however, was scarcely done before he started, and an exclamation escaped him which induced his companion to turn quickly on his heel, and face the sea. There, indeed, the growing light enabled both to discover an object which

could scarcely be other than one of interest to men in their situation.

It has been said already, that the deep bay, on the side of which stands the town of Porto Ferrajo, opens to the north, looking in the direction of the headland of Piombino. On the right of the bay the land, high and broken, stretches several miles before it forms what is called the Canal, while on the left it terminates with the low bluff on which stands the residence then occupied by Andrea Barrofaldi; and which has since become so celebrated as the abode of one far greater than the worthy vice-governor. The haven lying under these heights, on the left of the bay, and by the side of the town, it followed as a matter of course that the anchorage of the lugger was also in this quarter of the bay, commanding a clear view to the north, in the direction of the main land, as far as eye could reach. The width of the Canal, or of the passage between Elba and the Point of Piombino, may be some six or seven miles; and at the distance of less than one mile from

the northern end of the former, stands a small rocky islet, which has since become known to the world as the spot on which Napoleon stationed a corporal's guard, by way of taking possession, when he found his whole empire dwindled to the sea-girt mountains in its vicinity. With the existence and position of this island, both Raoul and Ithuel were necessarily acquainted, for they had seen it and noted its situation the previous night, though it had escaped their notice that, from the place where the Feu-Follet had brought up, it was not visible. In their first look to seaward that morning, which was before the light had grown sufficiently strong to render the houses on the opposite side of the bay distinct, an object had been seen in this quarter which had then been mistaken for the rock; but, by this time, the light was strong enough to show that it was a very different thing. In a word, that which both Raoul and Ithuel had fancied an islet was neither more nor less than a ship.

The stranger's head was to the northward,

and his motion before a light southerly air could not have exceeded a knot an hour. He had no other canvass spread than his three topsails and jib; though his courses were hanging in the brails. His black hull was just beginning to show its details; and along the line of light-yellow which enlivened his side were visible the dark intervals of thirteen ports; a real gun frowning in each. Although the hammocks were not stowed, and the hammock-cloths had that empty and undressed look so common to a man-of-war in the night, it was apparent that the ship had an upper-deck, with quarter-deck and forecastle batteries; or, in other words, that she was a frigate. As she had opened the town of Porto Ferrajo several minutes before she was herself seen from the Feu-Follet, an ensign was hanging from the end of her gaff, though there was not sufficient air to open its folds, in a way to let the national character of the stranger be known.

"Peste!" exclaimed Raoul Yvard, as soon as he had gazed a minute at the stranger, in silence; "a pretty *cul de sac* are we in if that

gentleman should happen to be an Englishman! What say you, Etooell, can *you* make out anything of that ensign—your eyes are the best in the lugger?"

"It is too much for any sight to detairmine at this distance, and that before the sun has risen; but by having a glass ready we shall soon know. Five minutes will bring us the Great Luminary, as our minister used to call him."

Ithuel had descended from the bulwark while speaking, and he now went aft in quest of a glass, returning to his old station, bringing two of the instruments; one of which he handed to his commander, while he kept the other himself. In another minute both had levelled their glasses at the stranger, whom each surveyed attentively for some time in profound silence.

"*Pardie!*" exclaimed Raoul, "that ensign is the tricolor, or my eyes are untrue to my own country. Let me see, Etooell, what ship of forty-two or forty-four has the republic on this coast?"

"Not *that*, Monsieur Yvard," answered

Ithuel, with a manner so changed, and an emphasis so marked, as at once to draw his companion's attention from the frigate to his own countenance; "not *that*, Monsieur Capitaing. It is not easy for a bird to forget the cage in which he was shut up for two years; if that is not the accursed Proserpine, I have forgotten the cut of my own jib!"

"La Proserpine!" repeated Raoul, who was familiar with his shipmate's adventures, and did not require to be told his meaning; "if you are not mistaken, Etooell, Le Feu-Follet needs put her lantern under a shade. This is only a forty, if I can count her ports."

"I care nothing for ports, or guns; it is the Proserpine; and the only harm I wish her is, that she were at the bottom of the ocean. The Proserpine, thirty-six, Captain Cuffe; though Captain Flog would have been a better name for him. Yes, the Proserpine, thirty-six, Captain Cuffe, Heaven bless her!"

"Bah!—this vessel has forty-four guns—now I can see to count them; I make twenty-two of a side."

"Ay, that's just her measure—a thirty-six on the list and by rate, and forty-four by count; twenty-six long eighteens below; twelve thirty-twos, carronades, on her quarter-deck; and four more carronades, with two barkers for'ard. She 'd just extinguish your Jack-o' Lantern, Monsieur Rule, at one broad-side; for what are ten twelve-pound carronades, and seventy men, to such a frigate?"

"I am not madman enough, Etooell, to dream of fighting a frigate, or even a heavy sloop-of-war, with the force you have just mentioned; but I have followed the sea too long to be alarmed before I am certain of my danger. La Railleuse is just such a ship as that."

"Hearken to reason, Monsieur Rule," answered Ithuel, earnestly; "La Railleuse, nor no other French frigate, would show her colours to an enemy's port; for it would be uselessly telling her errand. Now, an English ship might show a French ensign, for *she* always has it in her power to change it; and then *she* might be benefited by the cheat. The

Proserpine is French built, and has French legs, too, boots or no boots"—here Ithuel laughed a little, involuntarily, but his face instantly became serious again—" and I have heard she was a sister vessel of the other. So much for size and appearance; but every shroud, and port, and sail about yonder craft is registered on my back in a way that no sponge will ever wash out."

" Sa-a-c-r-r-r-e!" muttered Raoul between his teeth; " Etooell, if an Englishman, he may very well take it into his head to come in here, and perhaps anchor within half-a-cable's length of us! What think you of that, *mon brave Americain?*"

" That it may very well come to pass; though one hardly sees, either, what is to bring a cruiser into such a place as this. Every one hasn't the curiosity of a Jack-o' Lantern."

" *Mais que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère!—Bien;* we must take the weather as it comes; sometimes a gale, and sometimes a calm. As he shows his own ensign so loyal-

ly, let us return the compliment, and show ours. Hoist the ensign there, aft ! "

" Which one, Monsieur ?" demanded an old demure-looking quarter-master, who was charged with that duty, and who was never known to laugh ; " the captain will remember we came into port under the *drapeau* of Monsieur Jean Bull."

" *Bien* — hoist the drapeau of Monsieur Jean Bull, again. We must brazen it out now we have put on the masque. Monsieur lieutenant ! clap on the hawser, and run the lugger ahead, over her anchor, and see everything clear for spreading our pocket-handkerchiefs. No one knows when Le Feu-Follet may have occasion to wipe her face. — Ah ! now Etooell, we can make out his broadside fairly, he is heading more to the westward."

The two seamen levelled their glasses, and renewed their examinations. Ithuel had a peculiarity which not only characterized the man, but which is so common among Americans of his class, as, in a sense, to be national. On ordinary occasions he was talkative, and

disposed to gossip; but whenever action and decision became necessary he was thoughtful, silent, and, though in a way of his own, even dignified. This last fit was on him, and he waited for Raoul to lead the conversation. The other, however, was disposed to be as reserved as himself, for he quitted the knight-head, and took refuge from the splashing of the water used in washing the decks in his own cabin.

Two hours, though they brought the sun, with the activity and hum of the morning, had made no great change in the relative positions of things within and without the bay. The people of Le Feu-Follet had breakfasted, had got everything on board their little craft in its proper place, and were moody, observant, and silent. One of the lessons which Ithuel had succeeded in teaching his shipmates, was to impress on them the necessity of commanding their voluble propensities, if they would wish to pass for Englishmen. It is certain that more words would have been uttered, in this little lugger, in one hour, had her crew been

indulged to the top of their bent, than would have been uttered in an English first-rate, in two; but the danger of using their own language, and the English peculiarity of grumness, had been so thoroughly taught them that her people rather caricatured, than otherwise *ce grand talent pour le silence* which was thought to distinguish their enemies. Ithuel, who had a waggery of his own, smiled as he saw the seamen folding their arms, throwing discontent and surliness into their countenances, and pacing the deck singly, as if misanthropical and disdaining to converse, whenever a boat came alongside from the shore. Several of these visitors arrived in the course of the two hours mentioned; but the sentinel at the gangway, who had his orders, repulsed every attempt to come on board, pretending not to understand French, when permission was asked in that language.

Raoul had a boat's crew of four, all of whom had acquired the language, like himself, in a prison-ship, and with these men he now prepared to land; for, as yet, he had made little

progress in the business which brought him into his present awkward predicament, and he was not a man to abandon an object so dear to him, lightly. Finding himself in a dilemma, he was resolved to make an effort to reap, if possible, some advantage from his critical situation. Accordingly, after he had taken his coffee, and given his orders, the boat's crew was called, and he left the lugger's side. All this was done tranquilly, as if the appearance of the stranger in the offing gave no trouble to any in Le Feu-Follet.

On this occasion, the boat pulled boldly into the little harbour, its officer touching the shore at the common landing. Nor were the men in any haste to return. They lounged about the quay in waiting for their captain, cheapening fruits, chatting with the women, in such Italian as they could muster, and affecting to understand the French of the old sea-dogs who drew near them, all of whom knew more or less of that universal language, with difficulty. That they were the objects of suspicion, their captain had sufficiently warned them, and practice

rendered them all good actors. The time they remained in waiting for Raoul, was consequently spent in eluding attempts to induce them to betray themselves, and in caricaturing Englishmen. Two of the four folded their arms, endeavoured to look surly, and paced the quay in silence, refusing even to unbend to the blandishments of the gentler sex, three or four of whom endeavoured to insinuate themselves into their confidence by offerings of fruit and flowers.

"Amico," said Annunziate, one of the prettiest girls of her class in Porto Ferrajo, and who had been expressly employed by Vito Viti to perform this office, "here are figs from the main-land. Will you please to eat a few, that when you go back to Inghilterra, you may tell your countrymen how we poor Elbans live?"

"Bad fig," sputtered Jacques, Raoul's cock-swain, to whom this offering was made, and speaking in broken English, "better at 'ome. Pick up better in ze streets of Portsmout'!"

"But, Signore, you need not look as if they would hurt you, or bite you; you can eat

them, and, take my word for it, you will find them as pleasant as the melons of Napoli."

"No melon good, but English melon. English melon plenty as *pommes de terres*—bah!"

"Yes, Signore, as the melons of Napoli," continued Annunziate, who did not understand a syllable of the ungracious answers she received; "Signor Vito Viti, our *podestà*, ordered me to offer these figs to the forestieri—the Inglesi, who are in the bay."

"God dam!" returned Jacques, in a quick, sententious manner, which was intended to get rid of the fair tormentor, and which, temporarily, at least, was not without its effect.

But, leaving the boat's crew to be badgered in this manner, until relief came, as will be hereafter related, we must follow our hero in his way through the streets of the town. Raoul, guided by an instinct, or having some special object before his eyes, walked swiftly up the heights, ascending to the promontory so often mentioned. As he passed, every eye was turned on him, for, by this time, the distrust in the place was general; and the sudden appearance

of a frigate wearing a French ensign before the port, had given rise to apprehensions of a much more serious nature than any which could possibly attend the arrival of a craft as light as the lugger, by herself. Vito Viti had long before gone up the street to see the vice-governor; and eight or ten of the principal men of the place had been summoned to a council, including the two senior military dignitaries of the island. The batteries, it was known, were manned; and, although it would have puzzled the acutest mind of Elba to give a reason why the French should risk so unprofitable an attack, as one on their principal port, long before Raoul was seen among them, such a result was not only dreaded, but, in a measure, anticipated with confidence. As a matter of course, then, every eye followed his movements, as he went with bounding steps up the narrow terraces of the steep street, and the least of his actions was subjected to the narrowest and most jealous scrutiny.

The heights were again thronged with spectators, of all ages and classes, and of both sexes.

The mantles and flowing dresses of females prevailed as usual; for whatever is connected with curiosity is certain to collect an undue proportion of a sex whose imaginations are so apt to get the start of their judgments. On a terrace in front of the palace, as it was the custom to designate the dwelling of the governor, was the group of magnates, all of them paying the gravest attention to the smallest change in the direction of the ship, which had now become an object of general solicitude and apprehension. So intent, indeed, were they in gazing at this apprehended enemy, that Raoul stood in front of Andrea Barrofaldi, cap in hand, and bowing his salutation, before his approach was even anticipated. This sudden and unannounced arrival created great surprise, and some little confusion; one or two of the group turning away, instinctively, as it might be, to conceal the flushes that mounted to their cheeks at being so unexpectedly confronted by the very man whom, the minute before, they had been strongly denouncing.

"*Bon giorno*, Signor Vice-governatore,"

commenced Raoul, in his gay, easy and courteous manner, and certainly with an air that betrayed any feelings but those of apprehension and guilt; "we have a fine morning on the land, here; and apparently a fine frigate of the French republic in the offing, yonder."

"We were conversing of that vessel, Signor Smees," answered Andrea, "as you approached. What, in your judgment, can induce a Frenchman to appear before our town in so menacing a manner?"

"Cospetto! you might as well ask me, Signore, what induces these republicans to do a thousand other out-of-the-way things. What has made them behead Louis XVI? What has made them overrun half of your Italy; conquer Egypt, and drive the Austrians back upon their Danube?"

"To say nothing of their letting Nelsoni destroy them at Aboukir," added Vito Viti, with a grunt.

"True, Signore, or let Nelson, my gallant countryman, annihilate them near the mouth of the Nile. I did not consider it proper to boast

of English glory, though that case, too, may very well be included. We have several men in ze Ving-and-Ving who were in that glorious battle, particularly our sailing-master, Etooell Bolt, who was on board Nelson's own ship, having been accidentally sent on service from the frigate to which he properly belonged, and carried off expressly to share, as it might be, in the glory of this famous battle."

"I have seen the Signore," drily remarked Andrea Barrofaldi — "*è uno Americano?*"

"An American!" exclaimed Raoul, starting a little in spite of his assumed indifference of manner; "why, yes, I believe Bolt *was* born in America — English America, you know, Signore, and that is much the same thing as having been born in England, herself. We look upon *ze Yankés*, as but a part of our own people, and take them into our service most cheerfully."

"So the Signor Ituello has given us reason to believe; he is seemingly a great lover of the English nation."

Raoul was uneasy, for he was entirely igno-

rant of all that had passed in the wine-house, and he thought he detected irony in the manner of the vice-governor.

"Certainly, Signore," he answered, however, with unmoved steadiness; "certainly, Signore, the Americani adore Inghilterra; and well they may, considering all that great nation has done for them. But, Signor Vice-governatore, I have come to offer you the service of my lugger should this Frenchman really intend mischief. We are small, it is true; and our guns are but light; nevertheless we may break the frigate's cabin-windows, while you are doing him still greater injury from these heights. I trust you will assign ze Ving-and-Ving some honourable station, should you come to blows with the republicans."

"And what particular service would it be most agreeable to you to undertake, Signore," inquired the vice-governor, with considerate courtesy; "we are no mariners, and must leave the choice to yourself. The colonello, here, expects some firing, and has his artillerists already at their guns."

"The preparation of Porto Ferrajo is celebrated among the mariners of the Mediterranean, and, should the Frenchman venture within reach of your shot, I expect to see him unrigged faster than if he were in a dock-yard. As for ze leetl' Ving-and-Ving, in my opinion, while the frigate is busy with these batteries, it might be well for us to steer along the shore on the east side of the bay until we can get outside of her, when we shall have the beggars between two fires. That was just what Nelson did at Aboukir, Signor Podestà, a battle you seem so much to admire."

"That would be a manœuvre worthy of a follower of Nelsoni, Signore," observed the colonel, "if the metal of your guns were heavier. With short pieces of twelve, however, you would hardly venture within reach of long pieces of eighteen; although the first should be manned by Inglese and the last by Françese?"

"One never knows. At the Nile, one of our fifties laid the Orient, a three-decker,

athwart-hawse, and did her lots of injury. The vaisseau, in fact, was blown up. Naval combats are decided on principles altogether different from engagements on the land, Signor Colonello."

"It must be so, truly," answered the soldier; "but what means this movement?—you, as a seaman, may be able to tell us, capitano."

This drew all eyes to the frigate again, where, indeed, were movements which indicated some important changes. As these movements have an intimate connexion with the incidents of the tale, it will be necessary to relate them in a manner to render them more intelligible to the reader.

The distance of the frigate from the town might now have been five English miles. Of current there was none; and there being no tides in the Mediterranean, the ship would have lain perfectly stationary all the morning, but that a very light air arose from the southward. Before this air, however, she had moved to the westward about a couple of miles,

until she had got the government-house nearly a-beam. At the same time she had been obliquely drawing nearer, the circumstance which produced the alarm. With the sun had arisen the wind, and a few minutes before the colonel interrupted himself in the manner related, the topsails of the stranger had swelled, and he began to move through the water at the rate of some four or five knots the hour. The moment her people felt that they had complete command of their vessel, as if waiting only for that assurance, they altered her course, and made sail. Putting her helm a-starboard, the ship came close by the wind, with her head looking directly in for the promontory, while her tacks were hauled on board, and her light canvass aloft was loosened and spread to the breeze. Almost at the same instant, for everything seemed to be done at once and as by instinct, the French flag was lowered, another went up in its place, and a gun was fired to leeward—a signal of amity. As this second emblem of nationality blew out and opened to

the breeze, the glasses showed the white field and St. George's cross of the noble old ensign of England.

An exclamation of surprise and delight escaped the spectators on the promontory as their doubts and apprehensions were thus dramatically relieved. No one thought of Raoul at that happy moment, though to him there was nothing of new interest in the affair, with the exception of the apparent intention of the stranger to enter the bay. As Le Feu-Follet lay in plain view from the offing, he had his doubts, indeed, whether the warlike appearance of that craft was not the true reason of this sudden change in the frigate's course. Still, lying as he did, in a port hostile to France, there was a probability that he might yet escape without a very critical or close examination.

"Signor Smees, I felicitate you on this visit of a countryman," cried Andrea Barrofaldi, a pacific man by nature, and certainly no warrior, and who felt too happy at the prospect of passing a quiet day to feel dis-

trust at such a moment. "I shall do you honour in my communications with Florence for the spirit and willingness which you have shown in the wish to aid us, on this trying occasion."

"Signor Vice-governatore, do not trouble yourself to dwell on my poor services," answered Raoul, scarcely caring to conceal the smile that struggled about his handsome mouth; "think rather of the services of these gallant signori, who greatly regret that an opportunity for gaining distinction has been lost. But here are signals which must be meant for us—I hope my stupid fellows will be able to answer them in my absence."

It was fortunate for Le Feu-Follet, perhaps, that her commander was not on board when the stranger, the Proserpine, the very ship that Ithuel so well knew, made her number. The mystification that was to follow was in much better hands, while conducted by the New-Hampshire man, than it could possibly be in his own. Ithuel answered promptly, though what, he did not know himself; but he took

good care that the flags he showed should become so entangled as not to be read by those in the frigate, while they had every appearance of being hoisted fearlessly, and in good faith.

CHAPTER VI.

Are all prepared?
They are—nay more—embark'd; the latest boat
Waits but my chief—
My sword and my capote.
The Corsair.

WHAT success attended the artifice of Ithuel it was impossible to tell, so far as the frigate was concerned; though the appearance of mutual intelligence between the two vessels had a very favourable tendency towards removing suspicion from the lugger among those on shore. It seemed so utterly improbable that a French corsair could answer the signals of an English frigate, that even Vito Viti felt compelled to acknowledge to the vice-governor, in a whisper, that, so far, the circumstance was much in favour of the lugger's loyalty. Then the calm exterior of Raoul counted for

something, more especially as he remained, apparently, an unconcerned observer of the rapid approach of the ship.

"We shall not have occasion to use your gallant offer, Signor Smees," said Andrea, kindly, as he was about to retire into the house with one or two of his counsellors; "but we thank you none the less. It is a happiness to be honoured with the visit of two cruisers of your great nation on the same day, and I hope you will so far favour me as to accompany your brother commander, when he shall do me the honour to pay the customary visit, since it would seem to be his serious intention to pay Porto Ferrajo the compliment of a call. Can you not guess at the name of the frigate?"

"Now I see she is a countryman I think I can, Signore," answered Raoul, carelessly; "I take her to be La Proserpine, a French-built ship, a circumstance which first deceived me as to her character."

"And the noble cavaliere, her commander—you doubtless know his name and rank?"

"Oh! perfectly; he is the son of an old admiral, under whom I was educated, though we happen ourselves never to have met. Sir Brown is the name and title of the gentleman."

"Ah! that is a truly English rank and name, too, as one might say. Often have I met that honourable appellation in Shakspeare, and other of your eminent authors. Miltoni has a Sir Brown, if I am not mistaken, Signore?"

"Several of them, Signor Vice-governatore," answered Raoul, without a moment's hesitation or the smallest remorse; though he had no idea whatever who Milton was; "Milton, Shakspeare, Cicero, and all our great writers, often mention Signori of this family."

"Cicero!" repeated Andrea, in astonishment; "he was a Roman, and an ancient, capitano, and died before Inghilterra was known to the civilized world."

Raoul perceived that he had reached too far, though he was not in absolute danger of losing his balance. Smiling, as in considera-

tion of the other's provincial view of things, he rejoined, with an *à-plomb* that would have done credit to a politician, in an explanatory and half-apologetic tone.

"Quite true, Signor Vice-governatore, as respects him you mention," he said; "but not true as respects Sir Cicëro, my illustrious compatriot. Let me see — I do not think it is yet a century since our Cicero died. He was born in Devonshire,"—this was the county in which Raoul had been imprisoned—"and must have died in Dublin. Sì — now I remember, it *was* in Dublin that this virtuous and distinguished author yielded up his breath."

To all this Andrea had nothing to say; for, half a century since, so great was the ignorance of civilized nations as related to such things, that one might have engrafted a Homer on the literature of England, in particular, without much risk of having the imposition detected. Signor Barrofaldi was not pleased to find that the barbarians were seizing on the Italian names, it is true; but he was fain to set the circum-

stance down to those very traces of barbarism, which were the unavoidable fruits of their origin. As for supposing it possible that one who spoke with the ease and innocence of Raoul, was inventing as he went along, it was an idea he was himself much too unpractised to entertain; and the very first thing he did on entering the palace, was to make a memorandum which might lead him, at a leisure moment, to inquire into the nature of the writings, and the general merits of Sir Cicero, the illustrious namesake of him of Rome. As soon as this little digression terminated, he entered the palace, after again expressing the hope that "Sir Smees" would not fail to accompany "Sir Brown," in the visit which the functionary fully expected to receive from the latter in the course of the next hour or two. The company now began to disperse, and Raoul was soon left to his own meditations; which, just at that moment, were anything but agreeable.

The town of Porto Ferrajo is so shut in from the sea by the rock against which it is

built, its fortifications, and the construction of its own little port, as to render the approach of a vessel invisible to its inhabitants, unless they choose to ascend to the heights, and the narrow promenade already mentioned. This circumstance had drawn a large crowd upon the hill, again; among which Raoul Yvard now threaded his way, wearing his sea cap and his assumed naval uniform, in a smart, affected manner, for he was fully sensible of all the advantages he possessed on the score of personal appearance. His unsettled eye, however, wandered from one pretty face to another in quest of Ghita, who alone was the object of his search, and the true cause of the awkward predicament into which he had brought not only himself, but Le Feu-Follet. In this manner, now thinking of her he sought, and then reverting to his situation in an enemy's port, he walked along the whole line of the cliff, scarcely knowing whether to return or to seek his boat by doubling on the town, when he heard his own name pronounced in a sweet voice, which went directly to his heart. Turning on his heel, Ghita was within a few feet of him.

"Salute me distantly, and as a stranger," said the girl, in almost breathless haste, "and point to the different streets as if enquiring your way through the town. This is the place where we met last evening; but, remember, it is no longer dark."

As Raoul complied with her desire, any distant spectator might well have fancied the meeting accidental, though he poured forth a flood of expressions of love and admiration.

"Enough, Raoul," said the girl, blushing, and dropping her eyes, though no displeasure was visible on her serene and placid face; "another time I might indulge you. How much worse is your situation now than it was last night! Then you had only the port to fear; now you have both the people of the port and this strange ship — an Inglese, as they tell me!"

"No doubt — La Proserpine, Etooell says, and he knows. You remember Etooell, dearest Ghita, the American who was with me at the tower? — well, he has served in this very ship, and knows her to be La Proserpine,

of forty-four." Raoul paused a moment; then he added, laughing in a way to surprise his companion —" Oui — La Proserpine, le Capitaine Sir Brown!"

" What you can find to amuse you in all this, Raoul, is more than I can discover. Sir Brown, or sir any-body-else, will send you again to those evil English prison-ships of which you have so often told me; and there is surely nothing pleasant in *that* idea."

" Bah! my sweet Ghita, Sir Brown, or Sir White, or Sir Black, has not yet got me. I am not a child to tumble into the fire because the leading-strings are off; and Le Feu-Follet shines, or goes out exactly as it suits her purposes. The frigate, ten to one, will just run close in, and take a near look, and then square away and go to Livorno, where there is much more to amuse her officers than here, in Porto Ferrajo. This Sir Brown has his Ghita as well as Raoul Yvard."

" No, not a Ghita, I fear, Raoul," answered the girl, smiling, spite of herself, while her colour almost insensibly deepened —" Livorno

has few ignorant country girls like me, who have been educated in a lone watch-tower on the coast."

"Ghita," answered Raoul, with feeling, "that poor lone watch-tower of thine might well be envied by many a noble dame at Roma and at Napoli; for it has left thee innocent and pure — a gem that gay capitals seldom contain; or, if found there, not in its native beauty, which they sully by use."

"What know'st thou, Raoul, of Roma and Napoli, and of noble dames and rich gems?" asked the girl, smiling, the tenderness which had filled her heart at that moment betraying itself in her eyes.

"What do I know of such things, truly! why, I have been at both places, and have seen what I describe. I went to Roma on purpose to see the Holy Father, in order to make certain whether our French opinions of his character and infallibility were true, or not, before I set up in religion for myself."

"And thou *didst* find him holy and venerable, Raoul," interposed the girl, with earnest-

ness and energy, for this was the great point of separation between them — "I *know* thou found'st him thus, and worthy to be the head of an ancient and true Church. My eyes never beheld him; but this do I *know* to be true."

Raoul was aware that the laxity of his religious opinions—opinions that he may be said to have inherited from his country, as it then existed morally—alone prevented Ghita from casting aside all other ties, and following his fortunes in weal and in woe. Still he was too frank and generous to deceive, while he had ever been too considerate to strive to unsettle her confiding and consoling faith. Her infirmity even, for so he deemed her notions to be, had a charm in his eyes; few men, however loose or sceptical in their own opinions on such matters, finding any pleasure in the contemplation of a female infidel; and he had never looked more fondly into her anxious but lovely face than he did at this very instant, making his reply with a truth which bordered on magnanimity.

"*Thou* art my religion, Ghita!" he said;

"in thee I worship purity, and holiness, and—"

"Nay—nay, Raoul, *do* not—refrain; if thou really lov'st me utter not this frightful blasphemy; tell me, rather, if thou dids't not find the Holy Father as I describe him?"

"I found him a peaceful, venerable, and I firmly believe a *good* old man, Ghita; but *only* a man. No infallibility could I see about him; but a set of roguish cardinals, and other plotters of mischief, who were much better calculated to set Christians by the ears than to lead them to Heaven, surrounded his chair."

"Say no more, Raoul—I will listen to no more of this. Thou knowest not these sainted men, and thy tongue is thine own enemy, without—hark! what means that?"

"'Tis a gun from the frigate, and must be looked to; say, when and where do we meet again?"

"I know not, now. We have been too long, much too long, together, as it is; and must separate. Trust to me to provide the

means of another meeting; at all events, *we* shall shortly be in our tower, again."

Ghita glided away as she ceased speaking, and soon disappeared in the town. As for Raoul, he was at a loss, for a moment, whether to follow or not; then he hastened to the terrace, in front of the government-house, again, in order to ascertain the meaning of the gun. The report had drawn others to the same place, and on reaching it, the young man found himself in another crowd.

By this time the Proserpine, for Ithuel was right as to the name of the stranger, had got within a league of the entrance of the bay, and had gone about, stretching over to its eastern shore, apparently with the intention to fetch fairly into it on the next tack. The smoke of her gun was sailing off to leeward in a little cloud, and signals were again flying at her main-royal-mast-head. All this was very intelligible to Raoul, it being evident at a glance that the frigate had reached in nearer both to look at the warlike lugger which she saw in the bay, and to communicate more clearly with her

by signals. Ithuel's expedient had not sufficed; the vigilant Captain Cuffe, alias Sir Brown, who commanded the Proserpine, not being a man likely to be mystified by so stale a trick. Raoul scarcely breathed as he watched the lugger, in anticipation of her course.

Ithuel certainly seemed in no hurry to commit himself, for the signal had now been flying on board the frigate several minutes, and yet no symptoms of any preparation for an answer could be discovered. At length the halyards moved, and then three fair, handsome flags rose to the end of Le Feu-Follet's jigger-yard, a spar which was always kept aloft in moderate weather. What the signal meant Raoul did not know; for, though he was provided with signals by means of which to communicate with the vessels of war of his own nation, the Directory had not been able to supply him with those necessary to communicate with the enemy. Ithuel's ingenuity, however, had supplied the deficiency. While serving on board the Proserpine, the very ship which was now menacing the lugger, he had seen a meeting

between her and a privateer English lugger, one of the two or three of that rig which sailed out of England, and his observant eye had noted the flags she had shown on the occasion. Now as privateersmen are not expected to be expert, or even very accurate, in the use of signals, he had ventured to show these very numbers, let it prove for better or worse. Had he been on the quarter-deck of the frigate, he would have ascertained through the benedictions bestowed by Captain Cuffe, that his *ruse* had so far succeeded as to cause that officer to attribute his unintelligible answer to ignorance, rather than to design. Nevertheless, the frigate did not seem disposed to alter her course; for, either influenced by a desire to anchor, or by a determination to take a still closer look at the lugger, she stood on, nearing the eastern side of the bay, at the rate of some six miles to the hour.

Raoul Yvard now thought it time to look to the safety of Le Feu-Follet in person. Previously to landing, he had given instructions as to what was to be done in the event of the

frigate's coming close in; but matters now seemed so very serious that he hurried down the hill, overtaking Vito Viti in his way, who was repairing to the harbour to give instructions to certain boatmen concerning the manner in which the quarantine laws were to be regarded in an intercourse with a British frigate.

"You ought to be infinitely happy at the prospect of meeting an honourable countryman in this Sir Brown," observed the short-winded podestà, who usually put himself out of breath both in ascending and descending the steep street, "for he really seems determined to anchor in our bay, Signor Smees."

"To tell you the truth, Signor Podestà, I wish I was half as well persuaded that it *is* Sir Brown, and La Proserpine, as I was an hour ago. I see symptoms of its being a republican, after all, and must have a care for ze Ving-and-Ving."

"The devil carry away all republicans, is my humble prayer, Signor Capitano; but I can hardly believe that so graceful and gracious-looking a frigate can possibly belong to such wretches."

"Ah! Signore, if that were all, I fear we should have to yield the palm to the French," answered Raoul, laughing; "for the best-looking craft in his Majesty's service are republican prizes. Even should this frigate turn out to be the Proserpine, herself, she can claim no better origin. But I think the vice-governor has not done well in deserting the batteries, since this stranger does not answer our signals as she should. The last communication has proved quite unintelligible to him."

Raoul was nearer the truth than he imagined, perhaps; for certainly Ithuel's numbers had made nonsense, according to the signal-book of the Proserpine; but his confident manner had an effect on Vito Viti, who was duped by his seeming earnestness, as well as by a circumstance which, rightly considered, told as much against as it did in favour of his companion.

"And what is to be done, Signore?" demanded the podestà, stopping short in the street.

"We must do as well as we can, under the circumstances. My duty is to look out for ze Ving-and-Ving, and yours to look out for the

town. Should the stranger actually enter the bay, and bring his broadside to bear on this steep hill, there is not a chamber-window which will not open on the muzzles of his guns. You will grant me permission to haul into the inner harbour, where we shall be sheltered by the buildings from his shot, and then, perhaps, it will be well enough to send my people into the nearest battery. I look for bloodshed and confusion, before long."

All this was said with so much apparent sincerity that it added to the podestà's mystification. Calling a neighbour to him, he sent the latter up the hill with a message to Andrea Barrofaldi, and then he hurried down towards the port, it being much easier for him, just at that moment, to descend than to ascend. Raoul kept at his side, and together they reached the water's edge.

The podestà was greatly addicted to giving utterance to any predominant opinion of the moment; being one of those persons who *feel* quite as much as they *think*. On the present occasion he did not spare the frigate; for,

having caught at the bait which his companion had so artfully thrown out to him, he was loud in the expression of his distrust. All the signalling and showing of colours he now believed to be a republican trick; and precisely in proportion as he became resentful of the supposed fraud of the ship was he disposed to confide blindly in the honesty of the lugger. This was a change of sentiment in the magistrate; and, as in the case of all sudden but late conversions, he was in a humour to compensate for his tardiness by the excess of his zeal. In consequence of this disposition, the character and loquacity of the man, all aided by a few timely suggestions on the part of Raoul, in five minutes it came to be generally understood that the frigate was greatly to be distrusted, while the lugger was to rise in public favour exactly in the degree in which the other fell. This interposition of Vito Viti was exceedingly *à propos*, so far as Le Feu-Follet and her people were concerned; inasmuch as the examination of, and intercourse with, the boat's crew had rather left the impres-

sion of their want of nationality in a legal sense, than otherwise. In a word, had not the podestà so loudly and so actively proclaimed the contrary, Tommaso and his fellows were about to report their convictions that these men were all *bonâ fide* wolves in sheep's clothing—alias, Frenchmen.

"No, no — amici miei," said Vito Viti, bustling about on the narrow little quay, "all is not gold that glitters, of a certainty; and this frigate is probably no ally, but an enemy. A very different matter is it with zè Ving-y-Ving, and Il Signor Smees—we may be said to know *him*—have seen his papers, and the vice-governor and myself have examined him, as it might be, on the history and laws of his island, for England is an island, neighbours, as well as Elba—another reason for respect and amity; but we have gone over much of the literature and history of Inghilterra together, and find everything satisfactory and right; therefore are we bound to show the lugger protection and love."

"Most true, Signor Podestà," answered

Raoul, from his boat; "and such being the case, I hasten to haul my vessel into the mouth of your basin, which I will defend against boats, or any attempt of these rascally republicans to land."

Waving his hand, the young sailor pulled quickly out of the crowded little port, followed by a hundred *vivas*. Raoul now saw that his orders had not been neglected. A small line had been run out from the lugger, and fastened to a ring in the inner end of the eastern side of the narrow haven, apparently with the intention of hauling the vessel into the harbour itself. He also perceived that the light anchor or large kedge, by which Le Feu-Follet rode, was under foot, as seamen term it, or that the cable was nearly "up and down." With a wave of the hand he communicated a new order, and then he saw that the men were raising the kedge from the bottom. By the time his foot touched the deck, indeed, the anchor was up and stowed, and nothing held the vessel but the line which had been run to the quay. Fifty pairs of hands were applied

to this line, and the lugger advanced rapidly towards her place of shelter. But an artifice was practised to prevent her heading into the harbour's mouth, the line having been brought inboard abaft her larboard cathead, a circumstance which necessarily gave her a sheer in the contrary direction, or to the eastward of the entrance. When the reader remembers that the scale on which the port had been constructed was small, the entrance scarcely exceeding a hundred feet in width, he will better understand the situation of things. Seemingly to aid the movement, too, the jigger was set, and the wind being south or directly aft, the lugger's motion was light and rapid. As the vessel drew nearer to the entrance, her people made a run with the line, and gave her a movement of some three or four knots to the hour, actually threatening to dash her bows against the pier-head. But Raoul Yvard contemplated no such blunder. At the proper moment the line was cut, the helm was put a-port, the lugger's head sheered to starboard, and just as Vito Viti, who witnessed all with-

out comprehending more than half that passed, was shouting his *vivas*, and animating all near him with his cries, the lugger glided past the end of the harbour, on its outside, however, instead of entering it. So completely was every one taken by surprise by this evolution, that at first it appeared to be some mistake, accident, or blunder of the helmsman, and cries of regret followed lest the frigate might have it in her power to profit by the mishap. The flapping of canvass, notwithstanding, showed that no time was lost, and presently Le Feu-Follet shot by an opening between the ware-houses, under all sail. At this critical instant the frigate, which saw what passed, but which had been deceived, like all the rest, and supposed the lugger was hauling into the haven, tacked and came round with her head to the westward. But intending to fetch well into the bay, she had stretched so far over towards the eastern shore as by this time to be quite two miles distant; and as the lugger rounded the promontory close under its rocks, to avoid the shot of the batteries above, she left, in less

than five minutes, her enemy that space directly astern. Nor was this all. It would have been dangerous to fire, as well as useless, on account of the range; since the lugger lay nearly in a line between her enemy's chase-guns and the residence of the vice-governor. It only remained, therefore, for the frigate to commence what is proverbially "a long chase," viz. a "stern chase."

All that has just been related may have occupied ten minutes; but the news reached Andrea Barrofaldi and his counsellors soon enough to allow them to appear on the promontory in time to see the Ving-y-Ving pass close under the cliffs beneath them, still keeping her English colours flying. Raoul was visible, trumpet in hand; but as the wind was light, his powerful voice sufficed to tell his story.

"Signori," he shouted, "I will lead the rascally republican away from your port, in chase; *that* will be the most effectual mode of doing you a service."

These words were heard and understood, and a murmur of applause followed from some,

while others thought the whole affair mysterious and questionable. There was no time to interpose by acts, had such a course been contemplated, the lugger keeping too close in to be exposed to shot, and there being as yet no new preparations in the batteries to meet an enemy. Then there were the doubts as to the proper party to assail, and all passed too rapidly to admit of consultation or preconcert. The movement of Le Feu-Follet was so easy, as to partake of the character of instinct. Her light sails were fully distended, though the breeze was far from fresh; and, as she rose and fell on the long ground-swells, her wedge-like bows caused the water to ripple before them like a swift current meeting a sharp obstacle in the stream. It was only as she sunk into the water, in stemming a swell, that anything like foam could be seen under her fore-foot. A long line of swift-receding bubbles, however, marked her track, and she no sooner came abreast of any given group of spectators than she was past it, resembling the progress of a porpoise as he sports along a harbour.

Ten minutes after passing the palace, or the pitch of the promontory, the lugger opened another bay, one wider and almost as deep as that on which Porto Ferrajo stands, and here she took the breeze without the intervention of any neighbouring rocks, and her speed was essentially increased. Hitherto her close proximity to the shore had partially becalmed her, though the air had drawn round the promontory, making nearly a fair wind of it; but now the currents came full on her beam, and with much more power. She hauled down her tacks, flattened in her sheets, luffed, and was soon out of sight, breasting up to windward of a point which formed the eastern extremity of the bay last mentioned.

All this time the Proserpine had not been idle: as soon as she discovered that the lugger was endeavouring to escape, her rigging was alive with men. Sail after sail was set, one white cloud succeeding another, until she was a sheet of canvass from her trucks to her bulwarks. Her lofty sails taking the breeze above the adjacent coast, her progress was

swift, for this particular frigate had the reputation of being one of the fastest vessels in the English marine.

It was just twenty minutes, by Andrea Barrofaldi's watch, after Le Feu-Follet passed the spot where he stood when the Proserpine came abreast of it. Her greater draught of water induced her to keep half a mile from the promontory; but she was so near as to allow a very good opportunity to examine her general construction and appearance as she went by. The batteries were now manned, and a consultation was held on the propriety of punishing a republican for daring to come so near a Tuscan port. But there flew the respected and dreaded English ensign; and it was still a matter of doubt whether the stranger were friend or enemy. Nothing about the ship showed apprehension, and yet she was clearly chasing a craft which, coming from a Tuscan harbour, an Englishman would be bound to consider entitled to his protection rather than to his hostility. In a word, opinions were divided, and when that is the case

in matters of this nature decision is obviously difficult. Then, if a Frenchman, she clearly attempted no injury to any on the island; and those who possessed the power to commence a fire were fully aware how much the town lay exposed, and how little benefit might be expected from even a single broadside. The consequence was, that the few who were disposed to open on the frigate, like the two or three who had felt the same disposition towards the lugger, were restrained in their wishes, not only by the voice of superior authority, but by that of numbers.

In the meanwhile the Proserpine pressed on, and in ten minutes more she was not only out of the range, but beyond the reach of shot. As she opened the bay west of the town, Le Feu-Follet was seen from her decks, full a league ahead, close on a wind, the breeze hauling round the western end of the island, glancing through the water at a rate which rendered pursuit more than doubtful. Still the ship persevered, and in little more than an hour from the time she had crowded

sail she was up with the western extremity of the hills, though more than a mile to leeward. Here she met the fair southern breeze, uninfluenced by the land, as it came through the pass between Corsica and Elba, and got a clear view of the work before her. The studding-sails and royals had been taken in twenty minutes earlier; the bowlines were now all hauled, and the frigate was brought close upon the wind. Still the chase was evidently hopeless, the little Feu-Follet having everything as much to her mind as if she had ordered the weather expressly to show her powers. With her sheets flattened in until her canvass stood like boards, her head looked full a point to windward of that of the ship, and, what was of equal importance, she even went to windward of the point she looked at, while the Proserpine, if anything, fell off a little, though but a very little, from her own course. Under all these differences the lugger went through the water six feet to the frigate's five, beating her in speed almost as much as she did in her weatherly qualities.

The vessel to windward was not the first lugger by fifty that Captain Cuffe had assisted in chasing, and he knew the hopelessness of following such a craft under circumstances so directly adapted to its qualities. Then he was far from certain that he was pursuing an enemy at all, whatever distrust the signals may have excited, since she had clearly come out of a friendly port. Bastia, too, lay within a few hours' run, and there was the whole of the east coast of Corsica, abounding with small bays and havens, in which a vessel of that size might take refuge if pressed. After convincing himself, therefore, by half-an-hour's further trial in open sailing under the full force of the breeze of the fruitlessness of his effort, that experienced officer ordered the Proserpine's helm to be put up, the yards squared, and he stood to the northward, apparently shaping his course for Leghorn or the Gulf of Genoa. When the frigate made this change in her course, the lugger, which had tacked some time previously, was just on the point of being shut in by the western end of Elba, and

she was soon lost to view entirely, with every prospect of her weathering the island altogether, without being obliged to go about again.

It was no more than natural that such a chase should occasion some animation in a place so retired and ordinarily so dull as Porto Ferrajo. Several of the young idlers of the garrison obtained horses, and galloped up among the hills to watch the result; the mountains being pretty well intersected by bridle-paths, though totally without regular roads. Those who remained in the town, as a matter of course, were not disposed to let so favourable a subject for discourse die away immediately for want of a disposition to gossip on it. Little else was talked of that day than the menaced attack of the republican frigate and the escape of the lugger. Some, indeed, still doubted, for every question has its two sides, and there was just enough of dissent to render the discussions lively and the arguments ingenious. Among the disputants, Vito Viti acted a prominent part. Having committed himself so openly by his *vivas*, and his public

remarks in the port, he felt it due to his own character to justify all that he had said; and Raoul Yvard could not have desired a warmer advocate than he now had in the podestà. The worthy magistrate exaggerated the vice-governor's knowledge of English by way of leaving no deficiency in the necessary proofs of the lugger's national character. Nay, he even went so far as to affirm that he had comprehended a portion of the documents exhibited by the "Signor Smees" himself; and as to "ze Ving-y-Ving," any one acquainted in the least with the geography of the British Channel, would understand that she was precisely the sort of craft which the semi-Gallic inhabitants of Guernsey and Jersey would be apt to send forth to cruize against the altogether Gallic inhabitants of the adjacent main.

During all these discussions, there was one heart in Porto Ferrajo which was swelling with the conflicting emotions of gratitude, disappointment, joy and fear, though the tongue of its owner was silent. Of all of her sex in the

place, Ghita alone had nothing to conjecture, no speculation to advance, no opinion to maintain, nor any wish to express. Still she listened eagerly, and it was not the least of her causes of satisfaction to find that her own hurried interviews with the handsome privateer's-man, had apparently escaped observation. At length her mind was fully lightened of its apprehensions, leaving nothing but tender regrets, by the return of the horsemen from the mountains. These persons reported that the upper sails of the frigate were just visible in the northern board, so far as they could judge even more distant than the island of Capraya, while the lugger had beaten up almost as far to windward as Pianosa, and then seemed disposed to stand over towards the coast of Corsica; doubtless with an intention to molest the commerce of that hostile island.

CHAPTER VII.

Ant.—And, indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad; therefore it behoves men to be wary.

Clo.—Fear not, thou man, thou shalt lose nothing here.

Ant.—I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of change.

Winter's Tale.

Such was the state of things at Porto Ferrajo at noon, or about the hour when its inhabitants bethought them of their mid-day meal. With most, the siesta followed, though the sea air, with its invigorating coolness, rendered that indulgence less necessary to these islanders than to most of their neighbours on the main. Then succeeded the reviving animation of the afternoon, and the return of the zephyr, or the western breeze. So regular, indeed, are these changes in the currents of the air, during the summer months, that the mariner can rely with safety on meet-

ing a light breeze from the southward throughout the morning, a calm at noon — the siesta of the Mediterranean — and the delightfully cool wind from the west, after three or four o'clock; this last is again succeeded, at night, by a breeze directly from the land. Weeks at a time have we known this order of things to be uninterrupted; and when the changes did occasionally occur, it was only in the slight episodes of showers and thunder-storms; of which, however, Italy has far fewer than the coast of America.

Such, then, was the state of Porto Ferrajo, towards the evening that succeeded this day of bustle and excitement. The zephyr again prevailed, the idle once more issued forth for their sun-set walk, and the gossips were collecting to renew their conjectures, and to start some new point in their already exhausted discussions, when a rumour spread through the place, like fire communicated to a train, that "ze Ving-y-Ving" was once more coming down on the weather-side of the island, precisely as she had approached on the previous

evening; with the confidence of a friend and the celerity of a bird. Years had passed since such a tumult was awakened in the capital of Elba. Men, women and children poured from the houses, and were seen climbing the streets, all hastening to the promenade, as if to satisfy themselves, with their own eyes, of the existence of some miracle. In vain did the infirm and aged call on the vigorous and more youthful for the customary assistance; they were avoided like the cases of plague, and were left to hobble up the terraced street as best they might. Even mothers, after dragging them at their own sides till fearful of being too late, abandoned their young in the highway, certain of finding them rolled to the foot of the declivity, should they fail of scrambling to its summit. In short, it was a scene of confusion in which there was much to laugh at, something to awaken wonder, and not a little which was natural.

Ten minutes had not certainly elapsed, after the rumour reached the lower part of the town, before two thousand persons were on the hill,

including nearly all the principal personages of the place, 'Maso, Tonti, Ghita, and the different characters known to the reader. So nearly did the scene of this evening resemble that of the past, — the numbers of the throng on the hill and the greater interest excepted, — that one who had been present at the former might readily have fancied the latter merely its continuation. There, indeed, was the lugger, under her foresail and mainsail, with the jigger brailed, coming down wing-and-wing, and gliding along the glittering sea like the duck sailing towards her nest. This time, however, the English ensign was flying at the end of the jigger-yard, as if in triumph, and the little craft held her way nearer to the rocks, like one acquainted with the coast, and fearing no danger. There was a manner of established confidence in the way in which she trusted herself under the muzzles of guns which might have destroyed her in a very few minutes, and no one who saw her approach could very well believe that she was anything but a known as well as a confirmed friend.

"Would any of the republican rascals, think you, Signor Andrea," asked Vito Viti, in triumph, "dare to come into Porto Ferrajo in this style, — knowing, too, as does this 'Sir Smees,' the sort of people he will have to deal with? Remember, vice-governatore, that the man has actually been ashore among us, and would not be likely to run his head into the lion's mouth."

"Thou hast changed thine opinion greatly, neighbour Vito," answered the vice-governor, somewhat drily, for he was far from being satisfied on the subject of Sir Cicero, and on those of certain other circumstances in English history and politics; "it better becomes magistrates to be cautious and wary."

"Well, if there be a more cautious and circumspect man in Elba than the poor podestà of Porto Ferrajo, let him stand forth, i' God's name! and prove his deeds. I do not esteem myself, Signor vice-governatore, as the idlest or as the most ignorant man in the Grand Duke's territories. There may be wiser, among whom I place your eccellenza; but there is not a more

loyal subject, or a more zealous friend of truth."

"I believe it, good Vito," returned Andrea, smiling kindly on his old associate, "and have ever so considered thy advice and services. Still, I wish I knew something of this Sir Cicero; for, to be frank with thee, I have even foregone my siesta in searching the books in quest of such a man."

"And do they not confirm every syllable the Signor Smees has said?"

"So far from it that I do not even find the name. It is true, several distinguished orators of that nation are styled *English* Ciceroes; but then all people do this by way of commendation."

"I do not know that, Signore, — I do not know that: it may happen in our Italy, but would it come to pass, think you, among remote and so lately barbarous nations as England, Germany, and France?"

"Thou forgettest, friend Viti," returned the vice-governor, smiling now in pity at his companion's ignorance and prejudices, as just be-

fore he had smiled in kindness, "that we Italians took the pains to civilise these people a thousand years ago, and that they have not gone backward all this time. But there can be no doubt that 'ze Ving-y-Ving' means to enter our bay again; and there stands the 'Signor Smees' examining us with a glass, as if he, too, contemplated another interview."

"It strikes me, Vice-governatore, that it would be a sin next to heresy to doubt the character of those who so loyally put their trust in us. No republican would dare to anchor in the bay of Porto Ferrajo a second time. *Once*, it might possibly be done; but *twice?*—no, never, never!"

"I do not know but you are right, Vito, and I am sure I hope so. Will you descend to the port and see that the forms are complied with? Then glean such useful circumstances as you can."

The crowd was now in motion towards the lower part of the town to meet the lugger; and at this suggestion the podestà hurried down in the throng to be in readiness to

receive the "Signor Smees" as soon as he should land. It was thought more dignified and proper for the vice-governor to remain, and await to hear the report of the supposed English officer where he was. Ghita was one of the few also who remained on the heights: her heart now beating with renewed apprehensions of the dangers which her lover had again braved on her account, and now nearly overflowing with tenderness as she admitted the agreeable conviction that, had she not been in Porto Ferrajo, Raoul Yvard would never have incurred such risks.

Ghita delle Torri, or Ghita of the Towers, as the girl was ordinarily termed by those who knew her, from a circumstance in her situation which will appear as we advance in the tale, or Ghita Caraccioli, as was her real name, had been an orphan from infancy. She had imbibed a strength of character and a self-reliance, from her condition, which might otherwise have been wanting in one so young, and of a native disposition so truly gentle. An aunt had impressed on her mind the

lessons of female decorum; and her uncle, who had abandoned the world on account of a strong religious sentiment, had aided in making her deeply devout, and keenly conscientious. The truth of her character rendered her indisposed to the deception which Raoul was practising, while feminine weakness inclined her to forgive the offence, for the motive. She had shuddered again and again as she remembered how deeply the young sailor was becoming involved in frauds—and frauds, too, which might so easily terminate in violence and bloodshed; and then she had trembled under the influence of a gentler emotion, as she remembered that all these risks were run for her. Her reason had long since admonished her that Raoul Yvard and Ghita Caraccioli ought to be strangers to each other; but her heart told a different story. The present was an occasion suited to keep these conflicting feelings keenly alive, and as has been said, when most of the others hastened down towards the port, to be present when the Wing-and-Wing came

in, she remained on the hill, brooding over her own thoughts, much of the time bathed in tears.

But Raoul had no intention of trusting his Jack o' Lantern where it might so readily be extinguished by the hand of man. Instead of taking shelter against any new roving republican who might come along behind the buildings of the port, as had been expected, he shot past the end of the quay, and anchored within a few fathoms of the very spot he had quitted that morning, merely dropping his kedge under foot, as before. Then he stepped confidently into his boat, and pulled for the landing.

"Eh, Signor Capitano," cried Vito Viti, as he met his new protégé, with an air of cordiality, as soon as the foot of the latter touched the shore, "we looked for the pleasure of receiving you into our bosom, as it were, here in the haven. How ingeniously you led off that *sans culotte* this morning! Ah, the Inglese are the great nation of the ocean, Colombo notwithstanding! The vice-governor told me all about your illustrious female ad-

miral, Elisabetta, and the Spanish armada; and there was Nelsoni; and now we have Smees!"

Raoul accepted these compliments, both national and personal, in a very gracious manner, squeezing the hand of the podestà with suitable cordiality and condescension, acting the great man as if accustomed to this sort of incense from infancy. As became his public situation, as well as his character, he proposed paying his duty immediately to the superior authorities of the island.

"King George, my master," continued Raoul, as he and Vito Viti walked from the quay towards the residence of Andrea Barrofaldi, "is particularly pointed on this subject, with us all, in his personal orders. 'Never enter a port of one of my allies, Smeet,' said he, the very last time I took leave of him, 'without immediately hastening with your duty to the commandant of the place. You never lose anything by being liberal of politeness; and England is too polished a country to be outdone in these things by even

the Italians, the parents of modern civilization.'"

"You are happy in having such a sovrano, and still more so in being allowed to approach his sacred person."

"Oh! as to the last, the navy is his pet; he considers us captains, in particular, as his children. 'Never enter London, my dear Smeet,' he said to me, 'without coming to the palace, where you will always find a father'—you know he has one son among us who was lately a captain, as well as myself."

"San Stephano! and he the child of a great king! I did not know that I confess, Signore."

"Why, it is a law, in England, that the king shall give at least one son to the marine. 'Yes,' said his Majesty, 'always be prompt in calling on the superior authorities, and remember me benevolently and affectionately to them, one and all, even down to the subordinate magistrates, who live in their intimacy."

Raoul delighted in playing the part he was

now performing, but he was a little addicted to over-acting it. Like all exceedingly bold and decided geniuses, he was constantly striding across that step which separates the sublime from the ridiculous, and consequently ran no small hazard in the way of discovery. But with Vito Viti he incurred little risk on this score; provincial credulity and a love of the marvellous coming in aid of his general ignorance, to render him a safe depositary of anything of this sort which the other might choose to advance. Vito Viti felt it to be an honour to converse with a man who, in his turn, had conversed with a king; and as he puffed his way up the steep ascent again, he did not fail to express some of the feelings which were glowing in his breast.

"Is it not a happiness to serve such a prince?" he exclaimed,—"nay to die for him!"

"The latter is a service I have not yet performed," answered Raoul, innocently, "but which may one day well happen. Do you not think, podestà, that he who lays down his life for his prince merits canonization?"

"That would fill the calendar too soon in these wars, Signor Smees; but I will concede you the generals and admirals, and other great personages. Sì—a general or an admiral who dies for his sovereign, does deserve to be made a saint—this would leave these miserable French republicans, Signore, without hope or honour!"

"They are *canaille*, from the highest to the lowest, and can reasonably expect nothing better. If they wish to be canonized, let them restore the Bourbons, and put themselves lawfully in the way of such a blessing. The chase of this morning, Signor Vito Viti, must at least, have amused the town?"

The podestà wanted but this opening to pour out a history of his own emotions, sensations and raptures. He expatiated in glowing terms on the service the lugger had rendered the place by leading off the rascally republicans, showing that he considered the manœuvre of passing the port, instead of entering it, as one of the most remarkable of which he had ever heard, or even read.

"I defied the vice-governor to produce an example of a finer professional inspiration in the whole range of history, beginning with his Tacitus, and ending with your new English work on Roma. I doubt if the elder Pliny, or Mark Antony, or even Cæsar, ever did a finer thing, Signore; and I am not a man addicted to extravagance in compliments. Had it been a fleet of vessels of three decks, instead of a little lugger, Christendom would have rung with the glory of the achievement!"

"Had it been but a frigate, my excellent friend, the manœuvre would have been unnecessary. Peste! it is not a single republican ship which can make a stout English frigate skulk along the rocks, and fly like a thief at night."

"Ah, there is the vice-governor walking on his terrace, Sir Smees, and dying with impatience to greet you. We will drop the subject for another occasion, and a bottle of good Florence liquor."

The reception which Andrea Barrofaldi

gave Raoul, was far less warm than that he received from the podestà, though it was polite, and without any visible signs of distrust.

"I have come, Signor Vice-governatore," said the privateersman, "in compliance with positive orders from my master, to pay my respects to you again, and to report my arrival once more in your bay; though the cruise made since my last departure has not been so long as an East-India voyage."

"Short as it has been, we should have reason to regret your absence, Signore, were it not for the admirable proofs it has afforded us of your resources and seamanship," returned Andrea, with due complaisance. "To own the truth, when I saw you depart it was with the apprehension that we should never enjoy this satisfaction again. But, like your English Sir Cicero, the second coming may prove even more agreeable than the first."

Raoul laughed, and he even had the grace to blush a little; after which he appeared to reflect intensely on some matter of moment.

Smiles struggled round his handsome mouth, and then he suddenly assumed an air of sailor-like frankness, and disclosed his passing sensations in words.

"Signor Vice-governatore, I ask the favour of one moment's private conference; Signor Vito Viti, give us leave a single moment, if you please. I perceive, Signore," continued Raoul, as he and Andrea walked a little aside, "that you have not easily forgotten my little fanfaronade about our English Cicero. But what will you have? — we sailors are sent to sea children, and we know little of books. My excellent father, Milord Smeet, had me put in a frigate when I was only twelve, an age at which one knows very little of Ciceroes, or Dantes, or Corneilles, even as you will confess. Thus, when I found myself in the presence of a gentleman whose reputation for learning has reached far beyond the island he so admirably governs, a silly ambition has led me into a folly which he finds it hard to forgive. If I have talked of names of which I know nothing, it may be a weakness, such as young men

will fall into; but surely it is no heinous crime?"

"You allow, Signore, that there has been no English Sir Cicero?"

"The truth compels me to say I know nothing about it. But it is hard for a very young man, and one, too, who feels his deficiencies of education, to admit all this to a philosopher on a first acquaintance. It becomes a different thing when natural modesty is encouraged by a familiar goodness of heart; and a day's acquaintance with the Signor Barrofaldi is as much as a year with an ordinary man."

"If this be the case, Sir Smees, I can readily understand, and as willingly overlook, what has passed," returned the vice-governor, with a self-complacency which in nothing fell short of that which Vito Viti had so recently exhibited. "It must be painful to a sensitive mind to feel the deficiencies which unavoidably accompany the want of opportunities for study; and I, at least, can now say how delightful it is to witness the ingenuousness which admits it. Then, if England has never possessed a Cicero

in name, doubtless she has had many in qualifications, after allowing for the halo which time ever throws around a reputation. Should your duty often call you this way, Signore, during this summer, it will add to the pleasure I experience in enjoying the advantage of your acquaintance, to be permitted, in some slight degree, to direct your reading to such works as, with a mind like yours, will be certain to lead to profit and pleasure."

Raoul made a suitable acknowledgment for this offer, and from that moment the best understanding existed between the parties. The privateersman, who had received a much better education than he pretended to, and who was a consummate actor, as well as, on certain occasions, a practised flatterer, determined to be more cautious in future, sparing his literary conjectures, whatever liberties he might take with other subjects. And yet this reckless and daring mariner never flattered nor deceived Ghita in anything! With her he had been all sincerity, the influence he had obtained over the feelings of that pure-minded girl, being as

much the result of the nature and real feeling he had manifested, as of his manly appearance and general powers of pleasing. It would have been, indeed, matter of interesting observation, for one curious in the study of human nature, to note how completely the girl's innocence and simplicity of character had extended itself over every act of the young man, that was any way connected with her, preventing his even feigning that religion which he certainly did not feel, and the want of which was the sole obstacle to the union he had now solicited for nearly a twelvemonth, and which, of all others, was the object by far the closest to his heart. With Andrea Barrofaldi and Vito Viti, and most especially with the hated English, it was a very different thing, however; and seldom was Raoul happier than when he was employed in precisely such a scene of mystification as that in which he was at that moment engaged.

The vice-governor having established relations so completely amicable with the 'Signor Smees,' could do no less than invite his guest

to enter the palazzo, along with himself and the podestà. As it was yet too light for the sailor to seek an interview with Ghita, he cheerfully accepted the offer; making a careful examination of the whole of the northern margin of the sea, from his elevated position, however, before he crossed the threshold. This little delay, on Raoul's part, enabled the podestà to have a passing word with his friend unobserved.

"You have found 'Sir Smees,'" said Vito Viti, with earnestness, "all that your wisdom and prudence could desire, I trust? For my part, I consider him a most interesting youth; one destined at some future time to lead fleets and dispose of the fortunes of nations."

"He is more amiable and even better informed than I had thought, neighbour Vito Viti. He gives up his Sir Cicero with a grace which causes one regret that it was necessary; and, like yourself, I make no doubt of his becoming an illustrious admiral in time. It is true, his father, 'Milordo Smees,' has not done justice to his education; but it is not too late,

yet, to repair that evil. Go, desire him to enter; for I am impatient to draw his attention to certain works which may be useful to one in his line of life."

At this suggestion the podestà returned to the door, in order to usher the imaginary Guernsey-man into the residence. He found Raoul still standing on the entrance, examining the sea. There were two or three coasters, feluccas, as usual, stealing along the coast, in the Italian fashion, equally afraid of the barbarians of the south shore, and of the French of the north. All these would have been good prizes; but, to do the privateersman justice, he was little in the habit of molesting mariners of so low a class. There was one felucca, however, which was just rounding the promontory, coming in from the north; and with the people of this craft he determined to have some communication as soon as he returned to the port, with a view to ascertain if she had fallen in with the frigate. Just as he had come to this resolution, the podestà joined him, and he was ushered into the house.

It is unnecessary to give the discourse which succeeded. It related more to literature and matters in general, than to anything connected with our tale, the worthy vice-governor being disposed to reward the ingenuousness of the young sailor by furnishing him with as much instruction as the time and circumstances would allow. Raoul bore this very well, waiting patiently for the light to disappear, when he felt a perfect confidence of again meeting Ghita on the promenade. As he had discovered how much more safety there was in diffidence than in pretension, he found his task of deception comparatively easy; and by letting the vice-governor have his own way, he not only succeeded in gaining that functionary over to a full belief in his assumed nationality, but in persuading him to believe the 'Signor Smees' a young man of even more erudition than he had at first supposed. By means as simple and natural as these, Raoul made more progress in the good graces of Andrea Barrofaldi in the next two hours, than he could have done in a year by setting up his own knowledge and reading as authority.

There is little doubt that the vice-governor found this interview agreeable, from the time he was disposed to waste on it; and, it is certain, Raoul thought it some of the hardest duty in which he had ever been engaged. As for Vito Viti, he was edified, and he did not care to conceal it, giving frequent manifestations of his satisfaction by expressions of delight; occasionally venturing a remark as if expressly to betray his own ignorance.

"I have often known you great, vice-governatore," he cried, when Andrea had closed a dissertation on the earlier history of all the northern nations, which lasted full half-an-hour, "but never so great as you are to-night! Signore, you have been most illustrious this evening! Is it not so, Signor Smees? Could any professor of Pisa, or even of Padua, do more justice to a subject than we have seen done to this to which we have been listening?"

"Signor Podestà," added Raoul, "but one feeling has prevailed in my mind while attending to what has been said; and that has been

deep regret that my profession has cut me off from all these rich stores of profound thought. But it is permitted us to admire that which we cannot even imitate."

"Quite true, Signori," answered Andrea, with gentle benevolence; "but with dispositions like yours, Sir Smees, it is not so very difficult to imitate what we admire. I will write out a list of works which I would recommend to your perusal; and by touching at Livorno or Napoli, you will obtain all the books at reasonable prices. You may expect to see the list on your breakfast-table to-morrow morning, as I shall not sleep until it is completed."

Raoùl gladly seized upon this promise as a hint to depart, and he took his leave with suitable acknowledgments of gratitude and delight. When he got out of the palazzo, however, he gave a long, low whistle, like a man who felt he had escaped from a scene in which persecution had been a little lightened by the ridiculous, and uttered a few curses on the nations of the north for being so inconsiderate as to have histories so much longer and more

elaborate than he conceived to be at all necessary. All this passed as he hastened along the promenade, which he found deserted, every human being having apparently left it. At length he thought he perceived a female form some distance a-head of him, and in a part of the walk which was never much frequented. Hastening towards it, his quick eye discerned the person of her he sought, evidently waiting for his approach.

"Raoul," exclaimed Ghita, reproachfully, "in what will these often-repeated risks finally end? When so fairly and cleverly out of the harbour of Porto Ferrajo, why did you not possess the prudence to remain there?"

"Thou know'st the reason, Ghita, and why ask this question? San Nettuno! was it not handsomely done? — and is not this brave vice-governor rarely mystified? I sometimes think, Ghita, I have mistaken my vocation, which should have been that of a diplomate."

"And why a diplomate, in particular, Raoul? Thou art too honest to deceive long,

whatever thou may'st do on an occasion like this, and in a pressing emergency."

"Why? — but no matter. This Andrea Barrofaldi, and this Vito Viti, will one day know why. And now to our business, Ghita, since Le Feu-Follet cannot always decorate the bay of Porto Ferrajo."

"True," interrupted the girl, "and I have come for no other purpose than to say as much myself. My dear uncle has arrived, and he intends to sail for the Torri with the first felucca."

"There! — this has done more to make me believe in a Providence than all the preaching of all the padri of Italy. Here is the lugger to take the place of the felucca, and we can sail this very night. My cabin shall be yours entirely; and, with your uncle for a protector, no one can raise an evil tongue against the step."

Ghita, to own the truth, expected this very offer, which, agreeable as it was, her sense of propriety would certainly have prevented her from accepting but for one consideration, —

it might be made the means of getting Raoul out of an enemy's port and, in so much, out of harm's way. This, with one of her affectionate heart, was an object to which she would have sacrificed appearances of even a graver character. We do not wish the reader, however, to get a false impression of this girl's habits and education. Although the latter, in many particulars, was superior to that received by most young women of her class of life, the former were simple, and suited to her station as well as to the usages of her country. She had not been brought up with that severe restraint which regulates the deportment of the young Italian females of condition, perhaps in a degree just as much too severely, as it leaves the young American too little restrained; but she had been taught all that decorum and delicacy required, either for the beautiful or the safe; and her notions inculcated the inexpediency, if not the impropriety, of one in her situation taking a passage in a privateer at all, and particularly so in one commanded by an avowed lover. But, on

the other hand, the distance between Porto Ferrajo and the Towers was only about fifty miles, and a few hours would suffice to place her in safety beneath her own roof, and, what was of more importance in her view just then, Raoul in safety along with her. On all this had she pondered, and she was consequently prepared with an answer to the proposal that had just been made.

"If my uncle and myself could accept this generous offer, when would it be convenient for you to sail, Raoul?" the girl demanded. "We have now been absent longer than we intended, and longer than we ought."

"Within an hour, if there were any wind. But you see how it is, Ghita—the zephyr has done blowing, and it now seems as if every fan of Italy had gone to sleep. You can depend on our sailing the instant it shall be in our power. At need, we will use the sweeps."

"I will, then, see my uncle, and mention to him that there is a vessel about to sail, in which we had better embark. Is it not odd,

Raoul, that he is profoundly ignorant of your being in the bay? He gets more and more lost to things around him every day, and I do believe he does not recollect that you command an enemy's vessel half the time."

"Let him trust to me; he shall never have occasion to know it, Ghita."

"We are assured of that, Raoul. The generous manner in which you interposed to save us from the corsair of the Algerines, which began our acquaintance, and for which we shall always have occasion to bless you, has made peace between you and *us*, for ever. But for your timely succour, last summer, my uncle and myself would now have been slaves with barbarians."

"That is another thing that inclines me to believe in a Providence, Ghita! Little did I know, when rescuing you and your good kinsman from the boat of the Algerine, whom I was saving. And yet you see how all has come to pass, and that in serving you I have merely been serving myself."

"Would that thou could'st learn to serve

that God who disposes of us all at his holy pleasure!" murmured Ghita, tears forcing themselves to her eyes, and a convulsive effort alone suppressing the deep emotion with which she uttered the words; "but we thank thee again and again, Raoul, as the instrument of His mercy in the affair of the Algerine, and are willing to trust to thee now and always. It will be easy to induce my uncle to embark; but as he knows thy real character, when he chooses to recollect it, I hardly think it will do to say with *whom*. We must arrange an hour and a place to meet, when I will see to his being there, and in readiness."

Raoul and Ghita next discussed the little details: a place of rendezvous without the town, a short distance below the wine-house of Benedetta, being selected, in preference to one that would necessarily subject them to observation. This portion of the arrangements was soon settled, and then Ghita thought it prudent to separate. In this proposal her companion acquiesced with a better grace than he might have done had he not

the girl's assurance of meeting him within an hour, in order that everything might be ready for a start with the first appearance of wind.

When left alone, Raoul bethought him that Ithuel and Filippo were on shore as usual: the New-Hampshire man consenting to serve only on condition of being allowed to land; a privilege he always abused by driving a contraband trade on occasions like the present. So great was the fellow's dexterity in such matters, that Raoul, who disdained smuggling, while he thought himself compelled to wink at it in others, had less apprehensions of his committing the lugger, than he might have felt in the case of one less cunning. But it was now necessary to get these two men off, or abandon them, and fortunately remembering the name of the wine-house where they had taken their potations the previous night, he repaired to it without delay, luckily finding Ithuel and his interpreter deep in the discussion of another flask of the favourite Tuscan beverage. 'Maso and his usual companions

were present also, and there being nothing unusual in the commander of an English ship of war liking good liquor, Raoul, to prevent suspicion, drew a chair and asked for his glass. By the conversation which followed, the young privateersman felt satisfied that, though he might have succeeded in throwing dust into the eyes of the vice-governor and the podestà, these experienced old seamen still distrusted his character. It was so unusual a thing for a French frigate, while it was so usual for an English frigate, to be standing along the coast, near in, that these mariners, who were familiar with all such matters, had joined this circumstance to the suspicious signs about the lugger, and were strongly disposed to believe the truth concerning both vessels. To all this, however, Raoul was more indifferent than he might have been but for the arrangement to sail so soon. He took his wine, therefore, with apparent indifference, and, in proper season, withdrew, carrying with him Ithuel and the Genoese.

CHAPTER VIII.

Within our bay, one stormy night,
The isle's men saw boats make for shore,
With here and there a dancing light
That flash'd on man and oar.
When hailed, the rowing stopp'd and all was dark.
Ha! lantern work! — We 'll home! They 're playing shark!

DANA.

IT was dark when Raoul quitted the government-house, leaving Andrea Barrofaldi and Vito Viti in the library of the former. No sooner was the young seaman's back turned than the vice-governor, who was in a humour to display his acquirements, resumed a discussion which he had found so agreeable to his self-esteem.

"It is easy to see, good Vito Viti, that this young Inglese is a gentleman of noble birth, though not of a liberal education," he said; "doubtless, his father, Milordo Smees,

has a large family, and the usages of England are different from those of Italy in respect to birth-right. There, the eldest son alone inherits the honours of the family, while the cadets are put into the army and navy to earn new distinctions. Nelsoni is the son of a priest, I hear—"

"Cospetto! of a padre! Signor Vice-governatore," interrupted the podestà—"it is most indecent to *own* it. A priest must be possessed of the devil himself to *own* his issue, though issue he may certainly have."

"There, again, good Vito, it is different with the Luterani and us Catholics. The priests of England, you will please to remember, marry, while ours do not."

"I should not like to be shrived by such a padre!—The man would be certain to tell his wife all I confessed; and the saints could only say what would be the end on 't. Porto Ferrajo would soon be too hot to hold an honest man—ay, or even an honest woman in the bargain."

"But the Luterani do not confess, and are never shrived at all, you will remember."

" San Stefano !—How do they expect, then, ever to get to heaven ?"

" I will not answer that they do, friend Vito; and we are certain, that if they *have* such expectations, they must be most treacherous to them. But, talking of this Sir Smees; you perceive in his air and manner the finesse of the Anglo-Saxon race; which is a people altogether distinct from the ancient Gauls, both in history and characters. Pietro Giannone, in his *Storia Civile del Regno di Napoli*, speaks of the Normans, who were a branch of these adventurers, with great interest and particularity; and I think I can trace in this youth some of the very peculiarities which are so admirably delineated in his well-told, but too free, writings.—Well! Pietro; I was not speaking of thee, but of a namesake of thine, of the family of Giannona, an historian of Naples of note and merit—what is thy will ?"

This question was put to a servant, who entered at that moment, holding in his hand a piece of paper, which he desired to lay before his master.

" A cavaliere is without, Signor Andrea,

who asks the honour of an audience, and who sends in his name, as your eccellenza will find it on this paper."

The vice-governor took the slip of paper, and read aloud "Edward Griffin, tenente della marina Inglesa."

"Ah! here is an officer sent from 'ze Ving-y-Ving,' with some communication, friend Vito; it is fortunate you are still here to hear what he has to say. Show the lieutenant in, Pietro."

One who understood Englishmen better than Andrea Barrofaldi would have been satisfied at a glance that he who now entered was really a native of that country. He was a young man of some two or three and twenty, of a ruddy, round, good-natured face, wearing an undress coat of the service to which he professed to belong, and whose whole air and manner betrayed his profession quite as much as his country. The salutations he uttered were in very respectable Italian, familiarity with the language being the precise reason why he had been selected for the errand on

which he had come. After these salutations he put a piece of parchment into Andrea's hand, remarking—

"If you read English, Signore, you will perceive by that commission I am the person I represent myself to be."

"Doubtless, Signor Tenente, you belong to ze Ving-y-Ving, and are a subordinate of Sir Smees?"

The young man looked surprised, and at the same time half-disposed to laugh; though a sense of decorum suppressed the latter inclination.

"I belong to His Britannic Majesty's ship, Proserpine, Signore," he drily answered, "and know not what you mean by the Ving-y-Ving. Captain Cuffe, of that ship, the frigate you saw off your harbour this morning, has sent me down in the felucca that got in this evening, to communicate intelligence concerning the lugger which we chased to the southward about nine o'clock, but which I see is again snug at her anchor in this bay. Our ship was lying behind Capraya when I left her, but will be

here to take me off and to hear the news, before daylight, should the wind ever blow again."

Andrea Barrofaldi and Vito Viti stared, and that, too, as if a messenger had come from the lower regions to summon them away for their misdeeds. Lieutenant Griffin spoke unusually good Italian for a foreigner, and his manner of proceeding was so straight-forward and direct, as to carry with it every appearance of truth.

"You do not know what I mean by ze Ving-y-Ving?" demanded the vice-governor, with emphasis.

"To be frank with you, I do not, Signore. Ving-y-Ving is not English, nor do I know that it is Italian."

Mr. Griffin lost a good deal of ground by this assertion, which implied a doubt of Andrea's knowledge of foreign tongues.

"You say, Signor Tenente, if I comprehend your meaning, that Ving-y-Ving is not English?"

"Indeed, I do, sir; at least no English that I have ever heard spoken, at sea or ashore; and we seamen have a language of our own."

"Will you, then, permit me to ask you what is the translation of *ala e ala*, word for word."

The lieutenant paused a moment, and pondered. Then he laughed involuntarily, checking himself almost immediately, with an air of respect and gravity.

"I believe I now understand you, Signor Vice-governatore," he said; "we have a sea-phrase, something like this, to describe a fore-and-aft vessel with her sails swinging off on both sides; but *we* call it wing-and-wing."

"Sì, Signore—ving-y-ving. Such is the name of the lugger of your king which now lies in our bay."

"Ah! we thought as much, Signori; the scoundrel has deceived you, as he has done a hundred before you, and will do to a hundred again, unless we catch him to-night. The lugger is a celebrated French privateer which we have six cruizers in chase of at this moment, our own ship included. She is called Le Feu-Follet, which is not Wing-and-Wing, but Will-o'-the-Wisp, or Jack-o'-Lantern, in English; and which you in Italian would call

Il Fuoco Fatuo. Her commander is Raoul Yvard, than whom there is not a greater desperado sailing out of France; though it is admitted that the fellow has some good—nay, some *noble* qualities."

At every word uttered by the lieutenant, a page of history was blotted out from the memory of his listener. The vice-governor had heard the name of Raoul Yvard, and even that of Le Feu-Follet, which the malignancy of a bitter war had blackened nearly to the hues of piracy. The thought that he had been the dupe of this corsair—nay, that he had actually been entertaining him with honours and hospitality within an hour, was nearly too much for his philosophy. Men do not often submit to such humiliating sensations without a struggle; and before he would or could accord full credence to what was now told him, it was natural to oppose the objections that first offered.

"All this *must* be a mistake," observed the vice-governor; "there are English as well as French luggers, and this is one of the former. Her commander is a noble English gentleman,

a son of Milordo Smees; and though his education has been, in a trifling degree, neglected, he shows his origin and national character in all he says and does. Ze Ving-y-Ving is commanded by Sir Smees, a young officer of merit, as you must have seen yourself, Signore, by his evolutions this very morning. Surely you have heard of Il Capitano Sir Smees, the son of Milordo Smees!"

"We do not deny that his escape this morning was a clever thing, Vice-governatore, for the fellow is a seaman, every inch of him; and he is as brave as a lion; but, then, he is as impudent as a beggar's dog. There is no Sir Smees, nor any Sir Any-Body else, in command of any of our luggers anywhere. In the Mediterranean, we have no cruiser of this rig at all; and the two or three we have elsewhere, are commanded by old sea-dogs, who have been brought up in that sort of craft. As for Sirs, they are scarce out here, though the battle of the Nile has made a few of them for the navy. Then you'll not often meet with a nobleman's son in a clipper like this,

for that sort of gentry generally go from a frigate's quarter-deck into a good sloop, as commander, and after a twelvemonths' work, or so, in the small one, into a fast frigate again as a post-captain."

Much of this was gibberish to Andrea Barrofaldi, but Griffin being exclusively naval, fancied that every one ought to take the same interest in all these matters as he did himself. But, while the vice-governor did not understand more than half of the other's meaning, that half sufficed to render him exceedingly uneasy. The natural manner of the lieutenant, too, carried conviction with it; while all the original impressions against the lugger were revived by his statements.

"What say you, Signor Vito Viti?" demanded Andrea; "you have been present at the interviews with Sir Smees."

"That we have been deceived by one of the most oily-tongued rogues that ever took in honest men, if we have been deceived at all, Vice-governatore. Last evening, I would have believed this; but since the escape and return

of the lugger, I could have sworn that we had an excellent friend and ally in our bay."

"You had your signals, Signor Tenente; and that is proof of amity and understanding."

"We made our number when we saw the lugger with an English ensign set; for we did not suppose a Frenchman would be quietly lying in a Tuscan port; but the answer we got was nonsense; and then we remembered to have heard that this Raoul Yvard was in the habit of playing such tricks all along the Italian coast. Once on the scent, we were not the men to be easily thrown off it. You saw the chase, and know the result."

"There must be some error in all this! Would it not be well, Signore, to see the commander of the lugger—or to go on board of her, and satisfy yourself, with your own eyes, of the truth or falsehood of your surmises? Ten minutes might clear up everything."

"Your pardon, Signor Vice-governatore; were I to trust myself on board Le Feu-Follet I might remain a prisoner until a peace was

made; and I have yet two steps to gain before I can afford that risk. Then, as to letting Yvard know of my presence here, it would just give him the alarm, and cause us to lose the bird before we can spring the net. My orders are positive, not to let any one but the authorities of the island know of my visit, or its object. All we ask of you is to detain the lugger until morning; then *we* will see to it that she will never trouble the Italian coast again."

"Nay, Signore, we have guns of our own, and could easily dispose of so small a vessel, once assured of her being an enemy," returned the vice-governor, with a little pride and loftiness of manner; "convince us of that fact, and we'll sink the lugger at her anchors!"

"That is just what we do not wish you to do, Signore," answered the lieutenant, with interest. "From what passed this morning, Captain Cuffe has thought it probable that Monsieur Yvard, for some reason best known to himself, would come back here, as soon as he was rid of us; or that, finding himself on

the south side of the island, he might put into Porto Longone; and had I not met him here, I was to get a horse and ride across to the latter place, and make my arrangements there. We wish, by all means, to get possession of the lugger, which in smooth water is the fastest craft in the Mediterranean, and would be of infinite service to us. We think the Proserpine would prove too much for her, blowing fresh; but in moderate weather she will go six feet to our five. Now, if you open on her she will either escape or be sunk; for Raoul Yvard is not a man to strike to a town. All I ask is to be permitted to make night-signals, for which I am prepared, as soon as the frigate approaches, and that you will throw all the delays, by means of forms and permits, in the way of the Frenchman's sailing until to-morrow morning. We will answer for the rest."

"I should think there would be but little danger of the lugger's departing in the night, Signore Tenente, her commander rather expressing an intention of passing several days

with us; and it is this ease and confidence of his, which causes me to think that he cannot be the person you take him for. Why should Raoul Yvard and Le Feu-Follet come into Porto Ferrajo at all?"

"No one knows: it is the man's habit; and doubtless he has reasons for it. 'Tis said, he has even been in at Gibraltar; and it is certain, he has cut several valuable store-ships out of our convoys. There is an Austrian loading with iron, I perceive, in the harbour; probably he is waiting for her to fill up, and finds it easier to watch her at an anchor than by lying outside."

"You naval gentlemen have ways known only to yourselves; and all this may be so: but it seems an enigma to me. Have you any other proofs of your own character, Signor Tenente, than the commission you have shown me? for Sir Smees, as I have been taught to call the commander of the lugger, has one, too, that has an aïr of as much authenticity as this you have shown; and he wears quite as English-looking a uniform: how am I to judge between you?"

"That difficulty has been foreseen, Signor Vice-governatore, and I come well provided with the necessary proofs. I handed you my commission, as that is a document which, if wanting, might throw a distrust on all other proofs. But here is a communication from your superior, at Florence, recommending us to the kindness of the authorities of all the Tuscan ports; which you will readily understand. Captain Cuffe has furnished me with other proofs; which you can look over at your leisure."

Andrea Barrofaldi now set about a cautious and deliberate examination of all the papers shown him. They proved to be of a nature to remove every doubt; and it was not possible to distrust the party which presented them. This was a great deal towards convicting the Signor Smees of imposition; though both the vice-governor and the podestà were of opinion that Captain Cuffe might yet be mistaken as to the identity of the lugger.

"It is impossible, Signori," answered the lieutenant; "we know every English cruiser

in these seas by name and description at least, and most of them by sight. This is not one of them; and everything about her, particularly her sailing, betrays her real name. We hear there is a man in her who once belonged to our own ship, a certain Ithuel Bolt—"

"Cospetto!" exclaimed the podestà; "then we must set down this Sir Smees, after all, for an arrant rogue; for this is the very man we met at Benedetta's the past night. An Americano, Signor Tenente, is he not?"

"Why, the fellow *pretends* to be some such thing," answered the young man, colouring; for he was loth to confess the wrong which had been done the deserter; "but half the British seamen one falls in with now-a-days call themselves Americans, in order to escape serving His Majesty. I rather think this rascal is a Cornish or a Devonshire-man; he has the twang and the nasal sing-song of that part of the island. If an American, however, we have a better right to him than the French; speaking our language, and being descended from a common ancestry, and having a com-

mon character, it is quite unnatural for an American to serve any but the English."

"I did not know that, Vice-governatore!—I thought the Americani a very inferior sort of people to us Europeans, generally; and that they could scarcely claim to be our equals in any sense."

"You are quite right, Signor Podestà," said the lieutenant, briskly; "they are all you think them; and any one can see that at a glance. Degenerate Englishmen, we call them in the service."

"And yet you take them, occasionally, Signor Tenente; and, as I understand from this Ithuello, frequently contrary to their wishes, and by force," drily observed Andrea Barrofaldi."

"How can we help it, Signore! the king has a right to, and he has need of, the services of all his own seamen; and, in the hurry of impressing, we sometimes make a mistake. Then, these Yankees are so like our own people, that I would defy the devil himself to tell them apart."

The vice-governor thought there was some-

thing contradictory in all this; and he subsequently said as much to his friend the podestà; but the matter went no farther at the moment, most probably because he ascertained that the young lieutenant was only using what might be termed a national argument; the English government constantly protesting that it was impossible to distinguish one people from the other, *quoad* this particular practice; while nothing was more offensive to their eyes, in the abstract, than to maintain any affinity in appearance or characteristics.

The result of the discussion, notwithstanding, was to make the two Italians reluctant converts to the opinion of the Englishman, that the lugger was the dreaded and obnoxious Feu-Follet. Once convinced, however, shame, revenge, and mortification united with duty to quicken their exertions, and to render them willing assistants in executing the schemes of Captain Cuffe. It was, perhaps, fortunate for Raoul and his associates that the English officers had so strong a desire, as Griffin expressed it, "to take the lugger alive;" else might she

have been destroyed where she lay, by removing a gun or two from its proper embrasure, and planting them behind some natural ramparts among the rocks. The night was dark, it is true; but not so much so as to render a vessel entirely indistinct, at the short distance at which Le Feu-Follet lay; and a cannonade would have been abundantly certain.

When all parties were of a mind, as to the true character of the little craft in the bay, a consultation was had on the details of the course proper to be pursued. A window of the government-house which looked towards the direction of Capraya, or that in which the Proserpine was expected to arrive, was assigned to Griffin. The young man took his station at it about midnight, in readiness to burn the blue-lights with which he was provided, the instant he should discern the signals of his ship. The position of this window was well adapted to the desired object, inasmuch as the lights could not be seen from the town; while they were plainly open to the sea. The same

was essentially true as to the signals of the frigate, the heights interposing between her and the houses; and there being a still greater physical impossibility that anything lying in the bay should discover an object at sea, on the northern side of the promontory.

In this manner, then, did hour after hour pass away, a light land-breeze blowing; but coming so directly into the bay as to induce Raoul not to lift his kedge. Ghita and her uncle, Carlo Giuntotardi, had come off about ten; but there were still no signs of movement on board the lugger. To own the truth, Raoul was in no hurry to sail; for the longer his departure was protracted the longer would he have the happiness of retaining the lovely girl on board; and the zephyr of the succeeding day would be almost certain to carry Le Feu-Follet up to the island-like promontory of Monte Argentaro, the point where stood the watch-towers of which Carlo was the keeper, and in one of which he resided. Under the circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that the rising of the land-breeze was overlook-

ed, or at least disregarded; and that Raoul sat conversing with Ghita on deck until long past midnight, before he allowed her to seek her little cabin, where everything had been properly arranged for her reception. To own the truth, Raoul was so confident of having completely mystified all on shore, that he felt no apprehensions from that quarter; and, desirous of prolonging his present happiness as much as possible, he had very coolly determined not to sail until the southerly air of the morning should come; which, as usual, would just suffice to carry him well into the canal, when the zephyr would do the rest. Little did this hardy adventurer suspect what had occurred on shore since he quitted it; nor was he at all aware that Tommaso Tonti was at watch in the harbour, ready to report the slightest indication on the part of the lugger of a wish to quit the bay.

But while Raoul was so indifferent to the danger he ran, the feeling was quite the reverse with Ithuel Bolt. The Proserpine was the bane of this man's life; and he not only hated every

stick and every timber in her, but every officer and man who were attached to her—the king, whose colours she wore, and the nation whose interests she served. An active hatred is the most restless of all passions; and this feeling rendered Ithuel keenly alive to every chance which might still render the frigate dangerous to the lugger. He thought it probable that the former would return in quest of her enemy; and, expressly with a view to this object, when he turned in at nine, he left orders to be called at two, that he might be on the alert in season.

Ithuel was no sooner awoke than he called two trusty men whom he had prepared for the purpose, entered a light boat which was lying in readiness on the off-side of the lugger, and pulled with muffled oars towards the eastern part of the bay. When sufficiently distant from the town to escape observation he changed his course, and proceeded directly out to sea. Half an hour sufficed to carry the boat as far as Ithuel deemed necessary, leaving him about a mile from the promontory, and so far

to the westward as to give him a fair view of the window at which Griffin had taken post.

The first occurrence out of the ordinary course of things which struck the American, was the strong light of a lamp shining through an upper window of the government-house—not that at which the lieutenant was posted, but one above it—and which had been placed there expressly as an indication to the frigate that Griffin had arrived and was actively on duty. It was now two o'clock, or an hour or two before the appearance of light, and the breeze off the adjoining continent was sufficiently strong to force a good sailing-vessel, whose canvass had been thickened by the damps of the night, some four knots through the water; and as Capraya was less than thirty miles from Porto Ferrajo, abundant time had been given to the Proserpine to gain her offing; that ship having come from behind her cover as soon as the sun had set, and the haze of evening settled upon the sea.

Ithuel, usually so loquacious and gossiping in his moments of leisure, was silent and ob-

servant when he had anything serious on hand. His eye was still on the window in which the lamp was visible, the pure olive oil which was burning in it throwing out a strong, clear flame; when suddenly a blue light flashed beneath the place, and he got a momentary glimpse of the body of the man who held it, as he leaned forward from another window. The motion which now turned his head seaward, was instinctive; it was just in time to permit him to detect a light descending apparently into the water, like a falling star; but which, in fact, was merely a signal lantern of the Proserpine coming rapidly down from the end of her gaff.

"Ah! d—n you," said Ithuel, grating his teeth, and shaking his fist in the direction of the spot where this transient gleam of brightness had disappeared, — "I know you, and your old tricks with your lanterns and night-signals. Here goes the answer."

As he said this, he touched a rocket, of which he had several in the boat, with the lighted end of the segar he had been smoking,

and it went hissing up into the air; ascending so high as to be plainly visible from the deck of Le Feu-Follet before it exploded. Griffin saw this signal with wonder; the frigate noted it with embarrassment; for it was far too seaward of the lamp; and even 'Maso conceived it necessary to quit his station in order to report the circumstance to the colonel, whom he was to call in the event of any unusual occurrence. The common impression, however, among all these parties was, that a second cruiser had come through the canal from the southward, in the course of the night, and that she wished to notify her position to the Proserpine, probably expecting to meet that ship off the island.

On board Le Feu-Follet the effect was different. The land breeze of Italy is a side-wind to vessels quitting the bay of Porto-Ferrajo; and two minutes after the rocket exploded the lugger was gliding almost imperceptibly and yet at the rate of a knot or two, under her jigger and jib, towards the outer side of the port, or along the very build-

ings past which she had brushed the previous day. This movement was made at the critical instant when 'Maso was off his watch; and the ordinary sentinels of the works had other duties to attend to. So light was this little vessel that a breath of air set her in motion, and nothing was easier than to get three or four knots out of her in smooth water, especially when she opened the comparatively vast folds of her two principal luggs. This she did when close under the citadel, or out of sight of the town, the sentinels above hearing the flaps of her canvass without exactly understanding whence they came. At this instant Ithuel let off a second rocket, and the lugger showed a light on her starboard bow, so concealed, however, on all sides but one as to be visible only in the direction of the boat. As this was done, she put her helm hard down, and hauled her fore-sheet over flat to windward. Five minutes later Ithuel had reached her deck; and the boat was hauled in as if it had been inflated silk. Deceived by the second rocket, the Proserpine now made

her number with regular signal lanterns, with the intention of obtaining that of the stranger; trusting that the promontory would conceal it from the vessels in the bay. This told Raoul the precise position of his enemy; and he was not sorry to see that he was already to the westward of her; a fact that permitted him to slip round the island again, so near in as to be completely concealed by the background of cliffs. By the aid of an excellent night-glass, too, he was enabled to see the frigate, distant about a league, under everything which would draw, from her royals down, standing towards the mouth of the bay on the larboard tack; having made her calculations so accurately as to drop into windward of her port with the customary breeze off the land. At this sight Raoul laughed, and ordered the mainsail to be taken in. Half-an-hour later, he directed the foresail to be brailed; brought his jigger-sheet in flat; put his helm hard down; and hauled the jib-sheet to windward.

As this last order was executed day was just breaking over the mountains of Radicofani

and Aquapendente. By this time Le Feu-Follet lay about a league to the westward of the promontory, and abreast of the deep bay which has been already mentioned as being in that direction from the town. Of course she was far beyond the danger of missiles from the land. The night wind, however, had now failed, and there was every appearance that the morning would be calm. In this there was nothing extraordinary at that season, the winds which prevailed from the south being usually short and light, unless accompanied by a gust. Just as the sun appeared the south air came, it is true; but so lightly as to render it barely possible to keep the little lugger in command by heaving-to with her head to the south-west.

The Proserpine stood in until the day had advanced far enough to enable her look-outs to detect Le Feu-Follet braving her, as it might be, in the western board, at the distance of about a league and a half, under her jib and jigger, as described. This sight produced a great commotion in the ship, even the watch

below " tumbling up" to get another sight of a craft so renowned for evading the pursuit of all the English cruisers of those seas. A few minutes later Griffin came off, chopfallen and disappointed. His first glance at the countenance of his commander announced a coming storm, — for the superior of a vessel of war is no more apt to be reasonable under disappointment than any other potentate. Captain Cuffe had not seen fit to wait for his subordinate on deck ; but, as soon as it was ascertained that he was coming off in a shore-boat, he retired to his cabin, leaving orders with the first-lieutenant, whose name was Winchester, to send Mr. Griffin below as soon as he had reported himself.

" Well, sir," commenced Cuffe, as soon as his lieutenant came into the after-cabin, without offering him a seat, " here *we* are, and out yonder, two or three leagues at sea, is the d—d Few-Folly ! "—for so most of the seamen of the English service pronounced " Feu-Follet."

" I beg your pardon, Captain Cuffe," an-

swered Griffin, who found himself compelled to appear a delinquent, whatever might be the injustice of the situation, — "it could not be helped. We got in in proper time, and I went to work with the deputy-governor, and an old chap of a magistrate who was with him, as soon as I could get up to the house of the first. Yvard had been beforehand with me, and I had to under-run about a hundred of his lying yarns before I could even enter the end of an idea of my own."

"You speak Italian, sir, like a Neapolitan born; and I depended on your doing everything as it should have been."

"Not so much like a Neapolitan, I hope, Captain Cuffe, as like a Tuscan or a Roman," returned Griffin, biting his lip. "After an hour of pretty hard and lawyer-like work, and overhauling all the documents, I did succeed in convincing the two Elban gentry of my own character and of that of the lugger."

"And while you were playing advocate, Master Raoul Yvard coolly lifted his anchor, and walked out of the bay as if he were just

stepping into his garden to pick a nosegay for his sweetheart!"

"No, sir, nothing of the sort happened. As soon as I had satisfied the Signor Barrofaldi, the vice-governatore—"

"Veechy-govern-the-tory! D—n all veechys! and d—n all the governatorys, too! Do speak English, Griffin, on board an English ship, if you please, even should your Italian happen to be Tuscan. Call the fellow vice-governor at once, if that be his rank."

"Well, sir, as soon as I had satisfied the vice-governor that the lugger was an enemy, and that we were friends, everything went smoothly enough. He wanted to sink the lugger as she lay at her anchor."

"And why the devil didn't he do it? Two or three heavy shot would have given her a stronger dose than she could bear."

"You know, Captain Cuffe, it has all along been your wish to take her alive. I thought it would tell so well for the ship, to have it to say she had *caught* Le Feu-Follet, that I

opposed the project. I know Mr. Winchester hoped to get her as a reward for carrying her himself."

"Ay, and that would make you first. Well, sir, even if you didn't sink her it was no reason for letting her escape!"

"We could not prevent it, Captain Cuffe. I had a look-out set upon her—one of the very best men in Porto Ferrajo, as everybody will tell you, sir: and I made the signals of the lamp and the blue-lights, as agreed upon; and the ship answering, I naturally thought all was as it should be, until—"

"And who burnt the rockets off here, where we are at this moment? They deceived me, for I took them to be signals of their presence, from the Weasel or the Sparrow. When I saw those rockets, Griffin, I was just as certain of the Few-Folly, as I am now of having my own ship!"

"Yes, sir, those rockets did all the mischief; for I have since learned that, as soon as the first one was thrown, Master Yvard

tripped his kedge, and went out of the bay as quietly as one goes out of a dining-room, when he don't wish to disturb the company."

"Ay, he took *French* leave, the —— *sans-culotte*," returned the captain, putting himself in a better humour with his own pun. "But did you *see* nothing of all this?"

"The first I knew of the matter, sir, was seeing the lugger gliding along under the rocks, so close in, that you might have jumped aboard her; and it was too late to stop her. Before those lazy *far nientes* could have pricked and primed, he was out of gun-shot."

"Lazy what?" demanded the captain.

"*Far nientes*, sir; a nickname we give these siesta-gentry, you know, Captain Cuffe."

"I know nothing about it, sir; and I'll thank you always to speak to me in English, Mr. Griffin. That is a language which, I flatter myself, I understand; and it 's quite good enough for all my wants."

"Yes, sir, and for any man's wants. I 'm

sure, I am sorry I can speak Italian, since it has led to this mistake."

"Poh, poh, Griffin, you mustn't lay everything to heart which comes wrong end foremost. Dine with me to day, and we 'll talk the matter over at leisure."

CHAPTER IX.

Now in the fervid noon the smooth bright sea
Heaves slowly, for the wandering winds are dead
That stirr'd it into foam. The lonely ship
Rolls wearily, and idly flap the sails
Against the creaking masts. The lightest sound
Is lost not on the ear, and things minute
Attract the observant eye.

RICHARDSON.

THUS terminated the setting-down, like many others that Captain Cuffe had resolved to give, but which usually ended in a return to good nature and reason. The steward was told to set a plate for Mr. Griffin, among the other guests, and then the commander of the frigate followed the lieutenant on deck. Here he found every officer in the ship looking at Le Feu-Follet with longing eyes, and most of them admiring her appearance, as she lay on the mirror-like Mediterranean,

with the two light sails mentioned, just holding her stationary.

"A regular built snake-in-the-grass!" growled the boatswain, Mr. Strand, who was taking a look at the lugger over the hammock-cloths of the waist, as he stood on the heel of a spare top-mast to do so; "I never put eyes on a scamp that had a more d——n-my-eyes look!"

This was said in a sort of soliloquy, for Strand was not exactly privileged to address a quarter-deck officer on such an occasion, though several stood within hearing, and was far too great a man to enlighten his subordinates with his cogitations. It was overheard by Cuffe, however, who just at that instant stepped into the gangway to make an examination for himself.

"It is a snake-*out*-of-the-grass, rather, Strand," observed the captain; for *he* could speak to whom he pleased without presumption or degradation. "Had she stayed in port, now, she would have been *in* the grass, and we might have scotched her."

"Well, your honour, we can *English* her, as it is; and that'll be quite as nat'ral, and quite as much to the purpose as *Scotching* her, any day," answered Strand; who, being a native of London, had a magnificent sort of feeling towards all the dependencies of the empire, and to whom the word scotch, in that sense, was Greek, though he well understood what it meant "to clap a Scotchman on a rope;" "we are likely to have a flat calm all the morning, and our boats are in capital order; and then nothing will be more agreeable to our gentlemen than a row."

Strand was a grey-headed seaman, and he had served with Captain Cuffe when the latter was a midshipman, and had even commanded the top, of which the present boatswain had been the captain. He knew the "cut of the captain's jib" better than any other man in the Proserpine, and often succeeded with his suggestions when Winchester and the other lieutenants failed. His superior now turned round and looked him intently in the face, as if struck with the notion the other thus indirectly

laid before him. This movement was noted; and at a sign secretly given by Winchester, the whole crew gave three hearty cheers, Strand leading off as soon as he caught the idea. This was the only manner in which the crew of a man-of-war could express their wishes to their commander; it being always tolerated in a navy to hurrah, by way of showing the courage of a ship's company. Cuffe walked aft in a thoughtful manner, and descended to his cabin again; but a servant soon came up to say that the captain desired to see the first-lieutenant.

"I do not half like this boat-service in open daylight, Winchester," observed the senior, beckoning to the other to take a chair. "The least bungling may spoil it all; and then it's ten to one but your ship goes half-manned for a twelvemonth, until you are driven to pressing from colliers and neutrals."

"But we hope, sir, there 'll be no bungling in anything that the Proserpine undertakes. Nine times in ten an English man-of-war succeeds, when she makes a bold dash in boats against one of these picaroons. This lugger is

so low in the water, too, that it will be like stepping from one cutter into another to get upon her decks; and then, sir, I suppose you don't doubt what Englishmen will do?"

"Ay, Winchester, once on her deck, I make no doubt you'd carry her; but it may not be so easy as you imagine to get on her deck. Of all duty to a captain, this of sending off boats is the most unpleasant. He cannot go himself, and if anything unfortunate turns up, he never forgives himself. Now it's a very different thing with a fight in which all share alike, and the good or evil comes equally on all hands."

"Quite true, Captain Cuffe; and yet this is the only chance which the lieutenants have for getting ahead a little out of the regular course. I have heard, sir, that you were made commander for cutting out some coasters in the beginning of the war."

"You have not been misinformed; and a devil of a risk we all ran. Luck saved us, and that was all. One more fire from a cursed carronade would have given a Flemish account

of the whole party; for once get a little under, and you suffer like game in a *batteau.*" Captain Cuffe wished to say *battue;* but despising foreign languages, he generally made sad work with them whenever he did condescend to resort to their terms, however familiar. "This Raoul Yvard is a devil incarnate himself at this boarding work, and is said to have taken off the head of a master's mate of the Theseus with one clip of his sword when he retook that ship's prize in the affair of last winter—that which happened off Alicant!"

"I'll warrant you, sir, the master's mate was some slender-necked chap, who might better have been at home, craning at the girls as they come out of a church-door. I should like to see Raoul Yvard, or any Frenchman who was ever born, take off *my* head at a single clip!"

"Well, Winchester, to be frank with you, I should *not.* You are a good first, and that is an office in which a man usually wants all the head he has; and I'm not at all certain that you have any to spare I wonder if one could

not hire a felucca, or something larger than a boat, in this place, by means of which we could play a trick upon this fellow, and effect our purpose quite as well as by going up to him in our open boats, bull-dog fashion?"

"No question of it at all, sir; Griffin says there are a dozen feluccas in port here, all afraid to budge an inch, in consequence of this chap's being in the offing. Now one of these trying to slip along the shore might just serve as a bait for him, and then he would be famously hooked."

"I think I have it, Winchester. You understand; we have not yet been seen to communicate with the town; and, luckily, our French colours have been flying all the morning. Our head, too, is in-shore, and we shall drift so far to the eastward in a few minutes as will shut in our hull, if not our upper sails, from the lugger where she now lies. As soon as this is done, you shall be off with forty picked men for the shore. Engage a felucca, and come out, stealing along the rocks as close as you can, as if distrusting *us*. In due time

we will chase you in the boats; and then you must make for the lugger for protection as fast as you can, when, betwixt the two, I 'll answer for it you get this Master Yvard, by fair means or foul."

Winchester was delighted with the scheme; and in less than five minutes, orders were issued for the men to be detailed and armed. Then a conference was held, as to all the minor arrangements; when, the ship having become shut in from the lugger by the promontory, as expected, the boats departed. Half-an-hour later, or just as the Proserpine, after waring, had got near the point where the lugger would be again open, the boats returned, and were run up. Presently the two vessels were again in sight of each other, everything on board of each remaining apparently *in statu quo*. Thus far, certainly, the stratagem had been adroitly managed. To add to it, the batteries now fired ten or twelve guns at the frigate, taking very good care not to hit her, which the Proserpine returned, under the French ensign, having used the still greater

precaution of drawing the shot. All this was done by an arrangement between Winchester and Andrea Barrofaldi, and with the sole view to induce Raoul Yvard to fancy that he was still believed to be an Englishman by the worthy vice-governor, while the ship in the offing was taken for an enemy. A light air from the southward, which lasted from eight to nine o'clock, allowed the frigate to get somewhat more of an offing, meanwhile placing her seemingly beyond the reach of danger.

During the prevalence of the light air mentioned, Raoul Yvard did not see fit to stir tack or sheet, as it is termed, among seamen. Le Feu-Follet remained so stationary, that, had she been set by compass from any station on the shore, her direction would not have varied a degree the whole time. But this hour of comparative breeze sufficed to enable Winchester to get out of the harbour with La Divina Providenza, the felucca he had hired, and to round the promontory, under the seeming protection of the guns by which it was crowned, coming in view of the lugger pre-

cisely as the latter relieved her man at the helm for ten o'clock. Eight or nine men were visible on the felucca's deck, all dressed in the guise of Italians, with caps and striped shirts of cotton; and thirty-five men were concealed in the hold.

Thus far everything was favourable to the wishes of Captain Cuffe and his followers. The frigate was about a league from the lugger, and half that distance from La Divina Providenza; the latter had got fairly to sea, and was slowly coming to a situation from which it might seem reasonable, and a matter of course, for the Proserpine to send boats in chase; while the manner in which she gradually drew nearer to the lugger, was not such as to excite distrust, or to appear in the least designed. The wind, too, had become so light as to favour the whole scheme.

It is not to be supposed that Raoul Yvard and his followers were unobservant of what was passing. It is true that the latter wilfully protracted his departure, under the pretence that it was safer to have his enemy in sight

during the day, knowing how easy it would be to elude him in the dark; but, in reality, that he might prolong the pleasure of having Ghita on board; and it is also true that he had passed a delightful hour that morning in the cabin; but then his understanding eye noted the minutest fact that occurred, and his orders were always ready to meet any emergency which might arise. Very different was the case with Ithuel. The Proserpine was his bane; and even while eating his breakfast, which he took on the heel of the bowsprit expressly with that intent, his eye was seldom a minute off the frigate, unless it was for the short period she was shut in by the land. It was impossible for any one in the lugger to say whether her character was or was not known in Porto Ferrajo; but the circumstance of the blue-lights burnt in the government-house itself, and witnessed by Ithuel, rendered the latter, to say the least, probable, and induced more caution than might otherwise have been shown. Still there was no reason to suspect the character of the felucca; and the confident manner in which

she came down towards the lugger, though considerably in-shore of her, gave reason to believe that *she*, at least, was ignorant that Le Feu-Follet was an enemy.

"That felucca is the craft which lay near the landing," quietly observed Raoul, who had now come on the forecastle with a view to converse with Ithuel; "her name is La Divina Providenza; she is given to smuggling between Leghorn and Corsica, and is probably bound to the latter at this moment. It is a bold step, too, to stand directly for her port under such circumstances!"

"Leghorn is a free port," returned Ithuel; "and smuggling is not needed."

"Ay, free as to friends, but not free to come and go between enemies. No port is free in that sense: it being treason for a craft to communicate with a foe, unless she happen to be Le Feu-Follet," observed Raoul, laughing; "we *are* privileged, *mon brave!*"

"Corsica or Capraya, she'll reach neither to-day unless she find more wind. I do not understand why the man has sailed with no

more air than will serve to blow out a pocket-handkerchief."

"These little feluccas, like our little lugger, slip along even when there seems to be no wind at all. Then he may be bound to Bastia, in which case he is wise in getting an offing before the zephyr sets in for the afternoon. Let him get a league or two out here, more to the north-west, and he can make a straight wake to Bastia after his siesta is over."

"Ay, there go them greedy Englishmen a'rter him!" said Ithuel; "it 's as I expected; let 'em see the chance of making a guinea, and they 'll strive for it, though it be ag'in law, or ag'in natur. Now, what have they to do with a Neapolitan felucca, England being a sworn friend of Naples?"

Raoul made no reply to this, but stood watching the movement in silence. The reader will readily enough understand that Ithuel's remark was elicited by the appearance of the boats, which, five in number, at that instant pulled off from the frigate's side, and proceeded steadily towards the felucca.

It may be necessary now to mention the relative positions of the parties, the hour, and the precise state of the weather, with a view to give the reader clear ideas of the events that succeeded. Le Feu-Follet had not materially changed her place since her jib-sheet was first hauled over. She still lay about a league, a little north-of-west, from the residence of Andrea Barrofaldi, and in plain view of it, a deep bay being south of her, and abeam. No alterations had been made in her canvass or her helm; most of the first being still in the brails, and the latter down. As the head of the frigate had been kept to the westward for the last hour, she had forged some distance in that direction, and was now quite as near the lugger as was the promontory, though nearly two miles off the land. Her courses were hauled up on account of the lightness of the air; but all her upper sails stood, and were carefully watched and trimmed in order to make most of the cats'-paws, or rather, of the breathings of the atmosphere, which occasionally caused the royals

to swell outward. On the whole, she might be drawing nearer to the lugger at the rate of about a knot in an hour. La Divina Providenza was just out of gun-shot from the frigate, and about a mile from the lugger, when the boats shoved off from the former, though quite near the land, just opening the bay so often named. The boats, of course, were pulling in a straight line from the vessel they had just left towards that of which they were in pursuit.

As to the time, the day had advanced as far as eleven; which is a portion of the twenty-four hours when the Mediterranean in the summer months is usually as smooth as a mirror, and as calm as if it never knew a tempest. Throughout the morning, there had been some irregularity in the currents of air; the southerly breeze, generally light, and frequently fickle, having been even more light and baffling than common. Still, as has been seen, there was sufficient air to force a vessel through the water; and, had Raoul been as diligent as the people of the two other crafts,

he might, at that moment, have been off the western end of the island, and far out of harm's way. As it was, he had continued watching the result, but permitting all the other parties gradually to approach him.

It must be allowed that the ruse of the felucca was well planned; and it now seemed about to be admirably executed. Had it not been for Ithuel's very positive knowledge of the ship—his entire certainty of her being his old prison, as he bitterly called her, it is not improbable that the lugger's crew might have been the dupe of so much well-acted ingenuity; and, as it was, opinions were greatly divided, Raoul, himself, being more than half disposed to fancy that his American ally, for once, was wrong, and that the ship in sight was actually what she professed to be—a cruiser of the republic.

Both Winchester, who was in La Divina Providenza, and Griffin, who commanded the boats, played their parts in perfection. They understood too well the character of the wily and practised foe with whom they had to deal,

to neglect the smallest of the details of their well-concerted plan. Instead of heading towards the lugger, as soon as the chase commenced, the felucca appeared disposed to enter the bay, and to find an anchorage under the protection of a small battery which had been planted, for this express purpose, near its head. But the distance was so great as obviously to render such an experiment bootless; and, after looking in that direction a few minutes, the head of La Divina Providenza was laid off shore, and she made every possible effort to put herself under the cover of the lugger. All this was done in plain view of Raoul, whose glass was constantly at his eye, and who studied the smallest movement with jealous distrust. Winchester, fortunately for his purpose, was a dark-complexioned man, of moderate stature, and with bushy whiskers, such as a man-of-war's-man is apt to cultivate on a long cruise; and, in his red Phrygian cap, striped shirt, and white cotton trowsers, he looked the Italian as well as could have been desired. The men in sight, too,

had been selected for their appearance, several of them being actually foreigners, born on the shores of the Mediterranean; it being seldom, indeed, that the crew of an English or an American vessel of war, does not afford a representation of half the maritime nations of the earth. These men exhibited a proper degree of confusion and alarm, too; running to and fro, as soon as the chase became lively; exerting themselves, but doing it without order and concert. At length, the wind failing almost entirely, they got out two sweeps, and began to pull lustily; the real, as well as the apparent desire being to get as near as possible to the lugger.

"*Peste!*" exclaimed Raoul; "all this seems right: what if the frigate should be French, after all. These men in the boats look like my brave compatriotes!"

"They are regular John Bulls," answered Ithuel, positively, "and the ship is the spiteful Proserpyne," for so the New-Hampshireman always called his old prison. "As for them French hats, and the way they have of

rowing, they act it all for a take-in. Just let a six-pound shot in among 'em, and see how they 'll throw off their French airs, and take to their English schooling."

"I 'll not do that; for we might injure a friend. What are those fellows in the felucca about now?"

"Why, they 've got a small gun—yes, it 's a twelve-pound carronade, under the tarpaulin, for'rard of their foremast, and they 're clearin' it away for sarvice. We shall have something doin' 'fore the end of the week!"

"*Bien:* it is as you say—and, *voilà*, they train the piece on the boats!"

As this was said, the felucca was half concealed in smoke. Then came the discharge of the gun. The shot was seen skipping along the water, at a safe distance from the leading boat certainly, and yet sufficiently near to make it pass for indifferent gunnery. This leading boat was the Proserpine's launch, which carried a similar carronade on its grating, forward, and not half-a-minute was suffered to pass before the fire was returned.

So steady were the men, and so nicely were all the parts of this plot calculated, that the shot came whistling through the air, in a direct line for the felucca, striking its main-yard about half-way between the mast and the peak of the sail, letting the former down by the run.

"Human natur'!" ejaculated Ithuel; "this is acting up to the contract, dollars and cents! Captain Rule, they shoot better in sport than when they 're in downright airnest."

"This looks like real work," answered Raoul. "A man does not often shoot away the mainyard of his friend on purpose."

As soon as the crews of the boats saw the end of the yard come down they ceased rowing, and gave three hearty cheers, taking the signal from Griffin, who stood erect in the stern of the launch to give it.

"Bah!" cried Raoul; "these are English John Bulls, without a shadow of doubt. Who ever knew the men of the republic shout like so many Italian fantoccini, pulled by wires. Ah! *Messieurs les Anglais*, you have betrayed

your secret by your infernal throats; now look to hear us tell the remainder of the story."

Ithuel rubbed his hands with delight, perfectly satisfied that Raoul could no longer be deceived; though the fire between the felucca and the launch was kept up with spirit, the shooting being such as might have done credit, to a *bonâ fide* conflict. All this time the sweeps of the felucca were plied, the boats advancing at least two feet to the chase's one. La Divina Providenza might now have been three hundred yards from the lugger; and the launch, the nearest of the pursuers, about the same distance astern of the felucca. Ten minutes more would certainly bring the seeming combatants alongside of each other.

Raoul ordered the sweeps of Le Feu-Follet to be run out and manned. At the same time, her guns—twelve-pound carronades—were cast loose, and primed. Of these she had four of a side, while the two sixes on her forecastle were prepared for similar service. When everything was ready, the twelve sweeps dropped into the water as by a common instinct,

and a powerful effort started the lugger ahead. Her jib and jigger were both brailed at that instant. A single minute sufficed to teach Winchester how hopeless pursuit would be in the felucca, if not in the boats themselves, should the lugger endeavour to escape in this manner; it being quite practicable for her strong crew to force her, through the water by means of her sweeps alone from three to three and a half knots in the hour. But flight did not appear to be her object; for her head was laid towards La Divina Providenza, as if, deceived by the artifice of the English, she intended to prevent the capture of the felucca, and to cover a friend.

Raoul, however, understood himself far better than this supposition would give reason to suppose. He swept the lugger up in a line with La Divina Providenza and the boats, in the first place, as the position in which she would be the least likely to suffer from the fire of the latter; well-knowing that whatever shot were thrown, were purposely sent so high as to do no mischief; and, in the second

place, that he might bring his enemies in a single range from his own guns. In the meanwhile, the felucca and the boats not only continued to use their carronades, but they commenced on both sides a brisk fire of musketry; the former being now distant only a hundred yards from Le Feu-Follet, exceedingly hard pressed by her adversaries, so far as appearances were concerned. There being no wind at all at this juncture, (the little there had been having been entirely killed by the concussions of the guns,) the sea was getting fast covered with smoke; the felucca, in particular, showing more than common of the wreathy canopy over her decks, and about her spars; for, in truth, powder was burnt in considerable quantities, in different parts of the vessel, with this express object. Ithuel observed, too, that in the midst of this confusion and cloud, the crew of La Divina Providenza was increasing in numbers instead of diminishing by the combat, four sweeps next being out, each manned by three men, while near twenty more were shortly visible, running too and fro, and shout-

ing to each other in a language that was intended to be Italian, but which sounded much more, in his practised ears, like bastard English. The felucca was not fifty yards distant when this clamour became the loudest; and the crisis was near. The cheers of the boats on the other side of her, proclaimed the quick approach of Griffin and his party; the bows of La Divina Providenza having been laid, in a species of blind haste, directly in a line which would carry her athwart-hawse of Le Feu-Follet.

"*Mes enfans*," shouted Raoul, "*soyez calmes* —Fire!"

The whole of the five guns, loaded heavily with canister, were discharged into the smoke of La Divina Providenza—the shrieks which succeeded sufficiently proclaimed with what effect. A pause of solemn, wondering, silence followed on the part of the English; and then arose a manly shout, as if, prepared for every contingency, they were resolved to brave the worst. The boats were next seen coming round the bows and stern of the felucca, dashing

earnestly at their real enemy, while their two carronades returned the fire, this time loaded and aimed with deadly intent. But it was too late for success. As Griffin, in the launch, came out of La Divina Providenza's smoke, he saw the lugger's sails all opened, and filled with a dying effort of the southerly air. So light, however, was Le Feu-Follet, that a duck could hardly have sailed away more readily from the fowler, than this little craft shot a-head, clearing the smoke, and leaving her pursuers an additional hundred yards behind her. As the air seemed likely to stand long enough to place his party in extreme jeopardy, under the fire of the French, Winchester promptly ordered the boats to relinquish the pursuit, and to rally around the felucca.. This command was reluctantly obeyed, when a moment was given to both sides for deliberation.

Le Feu-Follet had sustained no injury worth mentioning; but the English had not less than a dozen men slain or hurt. Among the latter was Winchester himself; and as he saw that any success which followed would fall princi-

pally to the share of his subordinate, his wound greatly indisposed him to pursue any further a struggle which was nearly hopeless, as it was. Not so with Raoul Yvard, however. Perceiving that the frigate had taken the breeze, as well as himself, and that she was stealing along in the direction of the combatants, he determined to take an ample revenge for the audacity of the attempt, and, then proceed on his voyage.

The lugger accordingly tacked, and passed to windward of the felucca, delivering a close and brisk fire as she approached. At first this fire was returned, but the opposition soon ceased; and when Le Feu-Follet ranged up past her adversary, a few yards to windward, it was seen that the English had deserted her to a man, carrying off their wounded. The boats were pulling through the smoke towards the bay, taking a direction opposite to that in which the lugger's head was laid. It would have been easy for the French to ware, and probably to have overtaken the fugitives, sinking or capturing them to a man;

but there was a touch of high chivalry in the character of Raoul Yvard, and he declared, that as the artifice had been ingeniously planned, and daringly attempted, he would follow up his success no farther. Perhaps the appearance of Ghita on deck, imploring him to be merciful, had its influence; it is certain that not another shot did he allow to be fired at the enemy. Instead of pursuing her advantage in this manner, the lugger took in her after-sails, wore short round on her heel, came to the wind to leeward of the felucca, shivered all forward, set her jigger again, and luffed up so near what may be called the prize, that the two vessels came together so gently as not to break an egg, as it is termed. A single rope secured the felucca to the lugger, and Raoul, Ithuel, and a few more, stepped on board the former.

The decks of La Divina Providenza were reeking with blood; and grape and canister were sticking in handsful, in different parts of the vessel. Three dead bodies were found in her hold, but nothing having life was met with on

board. There was a tar-bucket filled at hand, and this was placed beneath the hatch, covered with all the combustible materials that could be laid hold of, and set on fire. So active were the flames, at that dry season, that Raoul regretted he had not taken the precaution to awaken them after he had removed his own vessel; but the southerly air continuing, he was enabled to get to a safe distance before they actually ascended the felucca's rigging, and seized upon her sails.

Ten minutes were thus lost, and they had sufficed to carry the boats out of gun-shot, inshore, and to bring the frigate very nearly down within gun-shot from the south-east. But, hauling aft all his sheets, Raoul soon took the lugger clear of her flaming prize; and then she stood towards the west end of Elba, going, as usual, in so light an air, three feet to the frigate's two. The hour, however, was not favourable to the continuance of the breeze, and in ten minutes more it would have puzzled the keenest senses to have detected the slightest current of air over the surface of the sea. Such

flickerings of the lamp, before it burnt entirely out, were common, and Raoul felt certain that there would be no more wind that day until they got the zephyr. Accordingly, he directed all the sails to be hauled up, an awning to be spread over the quarter-deck, and permission was given to the people to attend to their own affairs. The frigate, too, seemed to be aware that it was the moment for the siesta of vessels as well as of men, for she clewed up her royals and top-gallant sails, brailed her jib and spanker, hauled up her courses, and lay on the water as motionless as if sticking on a shoal. The two vessels were barely long-gun shot apart, and, under ordinary circumstances, the larger might have seen fit to attack the smaller in boats; but the lesson just given was a sufficient pledge to the French against the renewal of any such attempt, and they scarcely paid their neighbour's prowess the compliment to watch him. Half an hour later, when Winchester got back to the ship, limping with a hurt in his leg, and his people exhausted and mortified, it was found that the undertaking

had cost the lives of seven good men, besides the temporary suspension of the services of fifteen more.

Captain Cuffe was aware that his enterprise had failed as soon as he perceived the lugger under her canvass, playing around the felucca and the boats, held in perfect command. But when he discovered the latter pulling for the shore, he was certain that they must have suffered, and he was prepared to learn a serious loss, though not one that bore so large a proportion to the whole numbers of the party sent on the expedition. Winchester he considerately declined questioning, while his wound was being dressed; but Griffin was summoned to his cabin as soon as the boats were hoisted in and stowed.

"Well, Mr. Griffin, a d—d pretty scrape is this into which you have led me among you, with your wish to go boating about after luggers, and Raoul Yvards! What will the admiral say when he comes to hear of twenty-two men being laid on the shelf, and a felucca to be paid for, as a morning's amusement?"

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016